

Soviet envoy leaves Tehran

NICOSIA (AP) — A senior Soviet envoy left Tehran on Friday after extensive talks about an Iranian plan to end the Gulf war, Tehran radio reported. The broadcast quoted Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Belonogov as saying before leaving that Tehran and Moscow share identical views "on the need to end the war as soon as possible." Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani told a news conference Monday he had sent a message to Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, proposing an "idea" that could halt the conflict. Details of that plan have not been disclosed, but Mr. Rafsanjani said he was willing to open direct talks with Washington and meet with President Saddam in a bid to end the war. Iranian officials already have met with Iraqi, French, Algerian, Turkish, Yemeni and Kuwaiti emissaries in recent days. Mr. Belonogov said he shared Iran's concern that coalition forces were bombing civilian areas in Iraq. "Intentional destruction of Iraq's residential areas cannot conform with the U.N. Security Council resolution," which sanctioned the use of force to liberate Kuwait from Iraqi occupation, Mr. Belonogov said.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. الراي

Saudi desalination plant closed

BAHRAIN (AP) — An oil slick forced Saudi Arabia to shut its first desalination plant Friday, officials said. The plant, located at Safaniya on the Saudi coast, was closed as a preventive measure before oil entered its intake valves, according to Saudi Arabia's Meteorological and Environmental Protection Agency. The plant is run by the huge oil company Saudi Aramco and supplies fresh water to its employees in the area, oil executives said. Derek Brown, an environmental specialist at the Bahrain Petroleum Co., said he believed the plant was a small one. A Saudi official said he expected the Safaniya plant would be closed for "only a few days." He said authorities from Saudi Aramco had said nothing about closing refineries or other oil installations along the coast. A Saudi Aramco official declined to comment, when reached by telephone in Dhahran. Workers, meanwhile, rushed to clean up a thick swath of crude that fouled fertile marine beds along the Saudi shore.

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Allies wreck Baghdad bridge

Air raids cause premature births and miscarriages

Combined agency dispatches

ALLIED BOMBERS Friday completed the destruction of a major bridge across the Tigris River in Baghdad, and a newspaper reported that the air raids had caused scores of miscarriages and premature births.

Baghdad Radio suggested a possible connection between the Gulf war and Thursday's mortar attack on the residence of British Prime Minister John Major.

Although the Irish Republican Army (IRA) has claimed responsibility, Baghdad Radio said "observers in London" agreed that the attack was "the start of acts of revenge against the British government because of its participation in the U.S. aggression on Iraq."

The Iraqi capital experienced far fewer bombing and missile strikes late Thursday and early Friday than it did the previous night. But a major communications centre in the Al Jaima district was destroyed, and the Al Jomhuriya bridge over the Tigris, left partly intact after two

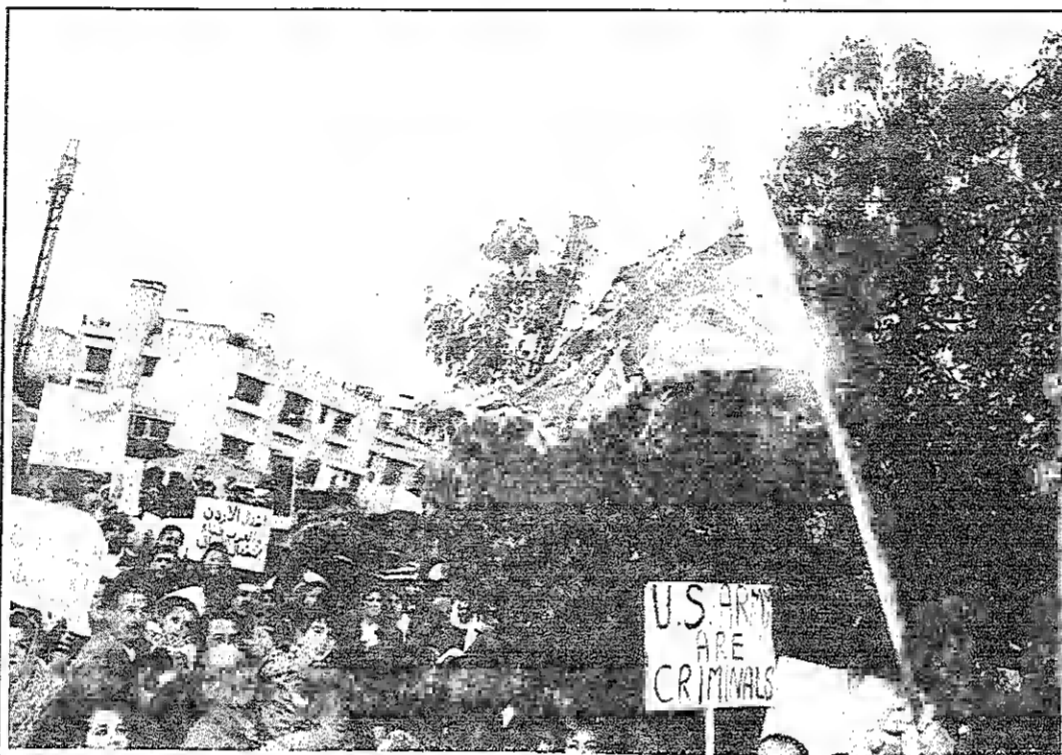
earlier strikes, was demolished. The newspaper of the ruling Baath party, Al Thawra, reported that there had been a sharp rise in the number of miscarriages and premature births in Baghdad since the air raids started on Jan. 17.

It quoted Mohammad Ali Al Tawil, manager of Al Ilwya Maternity Hospital, as saying 35 to 45 premature deliveries were occurring daily at the facility. He said the premature deliveries and miscarriages were caused by fear and also by lack of proper medicine and nutrition.

Travellers reaching Baghdad reported that intensive bombing and missile attacks continued on the southern port city of Basra and the northern city of Mosul. A London newspaper reported that 47 civilians died when allied bombers attacked a bridge crowded with pedestrians this week.

The Independent quoted Dr. Rabi Farooq, the British-trained director of Saddam Hospital in Nasiriyah, 1400 kilometres south of Baghdad, as

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BURNING THE FLAG: A group of demonstrators in Amman Friday burns the British flag in protest against the allied forces' war against

Iraq. Britain is a leading member of the anti-Iraq coalition (see page 3)

France and Britain plan post-war settlement in Gulf

Combined agency dispatches

FRANCE AND Britain will charge a joint group of experts to lay groundwork for a post-war settlement in the Gulf, the French Foreign Ministry announced Friday.

Spokesman Daniel Bernard said that foreign ministers Roland Dumas of France and Douglas Hurd of Britain agreed to create such a group during a meeting Thursday in London.

"This group will put together work on different concepts," Mr. Bernard said, including regional security, the settlement of regional conflicts and the role of the United Nations.

Such a concept will surely consider President Francois Mitterrand's repeated call for an international peace conference on the Middle East, including the Palestinian question.

Mr. Bernard stressed that Britain and France, both permanent members of the U.N. Security Council with forces in the Gulf, have a major role to play in a post-war settlement. The announcement came a day after Mr. Mitterrand rejected long-term occupation of large chunks of Iraq and underscored that the United Nations must play a leading role in restoring peace to the Gulf (see page 2).

French desire for a U.N. role, apparently shared by Britain, seems at odds with U.S. Secretary James Baker's proposals favouring talks among coalition powers and Middle East countries.

Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jacques Poos meanwhile told a Paris-

based newspaper that the European Community (EC) would propose its own Marshall plan for the Middle East before the end of February.

Mr. Poos, whose tiny country holds the 12-nation community's rotating six-month presidency, said the post-war rebuilding plan would be floated to Israel and Arab countries for their opinions.

"We haven't yet spoken of figures but, if war has its price, peace will also have one," Mr. Poos was quoted as saying in the Roman Catholic newspaper La Croix.

"We must prepare public opinion and make it understand that the reconstruction of the devastated Middle East will be one of the grand objectives of the end of the 20th century," Mr. Poos said.

Mr. Poos acknowledged that such a plan, modelled on the U.S.-funded reconstruction of Europe after World War II, should be backed by the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Nations to succeed.

However, the firmly pro-Israeli stance taken by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) would make any official contacts with PLO leader Yasser Arafat "extremely difficult," Mr. Poos said.

He contended that Palestinian spokesmen acceptable to Palestinians, Arab countries and Israel will eventually emerge and stressed the right of the Palestinians to self-determination.

Mr. Bernard said that Iraqi Ambassador Abdul Razzak Al Hashemi planned later Friday to formalise Baghdad's break in relations with Paris.

Mr. Hashemi was expected to detail plans for his departure with three aides. They are the last Iraqi diplo-

mans on post in the French capital after France expelled 14 others last month.

Baghdad Radio said Wednesday that Iraq was severing diplomatic relations with the United States, France, Britain, Italy, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Israel's Labour Party leader was quoted Friday as predicting the Gulf war would end in several weeks but warning of a new conflict if the Arab-Israeli question is not resolved soon.

The Hamburg-based mass circulation newspaper, Bild, quoted Labour's Shimon Peres as saying that talks on resolving the Palestinian problem were urgently needed.

"The war will be over in several weeks. However, not the Arab-Israeli conflict. When that is not solved, there will be a new war," Mr. Peres said in the interview.

"We must immediately begin the talks. Either with the Palestinians alone, with the Palestinians and Jordan, or with delegations made up of Palestinians, Jordanians and Egyptians," the newspaper quoted Mr. Peres as saying.

Bild said Mr. Peres also wants, as a second step towards settling problems in the Middle East, a conference with all states bordering Israel, including Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Saudi Arabia.

The conference could lead to general regulations to ensure peace and result in a unified market in the region, Bild quoted Mr. Peres as saying.

In addition, Mr. Peres foresaw declaring the Middle East a nuclear-free zone and disarmament, with unified

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Iraq invites U.N. to verify U.S. claim

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ ON FRIDAY asked the United Nations to investigate whether a bombed-out factory was a milk production plant or was making biological weapons, as claimed by the United States.

In two letters to the secretary-general, Iraqi Ambassador Abdul Amir Al Anbani also demanded war reparations from the allied coalition and said Iraq would not repay previous war debts to any country now opposing it.

Allied aircraft blasted a factory on Jan. 21 in the Abu Ghuraid region that General Colin Powell, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, later said was making "bacteriological weapons."

Mr. Anbani and many other Iraqi officials say it was a milk plant, though it was painted in camouflage and surrounded by barbed-wire fencing.

"In order to establish the truth and expose the empty allegations by the United States, which are designed to conceal the criminal nature of the aggression carried out by United States-NATO-Zionist forces, I request you... to send a fact-finding mission to investigate the type of factory involved," Mr. Anbani asked Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

In his second letter to the U.N. chief, Mr. Anbani accused the allies of "evil acts of aggression"

against Iraqi "civilian, economic, scientific, cultural and religious institutions."

These attacks, he said, "seriously damaged the infrastructure of Iraq in order to lay waste to the country and deprive it of its achievements in the field of developments," which he said was a plot by America, the NATO allies and the Israelis to dominate the Middle East.

"All the states which are collaborating in this concerted and deliberate campaign of aggression must compensate Iraq in full for all the damage caused to its enterprises and individual persons and their property," he said.

"The creditor to which Iraq is indebted and which are participating in this aggression will not be reimbursed the amounts corresponding to Iraq for the damage inflicted on it," Mr. Anbani said.

Among Iraq's creditors in the allied coalition are Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar — and Kuwait.

Iraqi officials said the factory, which was bombed towards the end of the first week of the war, was the only plant in the country that made infant formula.

Iraqi officials took Cable News Network reporter Peter Arnett to the plant to film the damage and

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Cheney, Powell hold war council in S. Arabia

Combined agency dispatches

WASHINGTON'S TWO top military officials arrived in Saudi Arabia Friday to discuss when allied forces would launch a ground attack against Iraq.

Defence Secretary Dick Cheney met the exiled Kuwaiti emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, in the Saudi resort of Taif before flying to Riyadh for talks with allied military commander General Norman Schwarzkopf.

Mr. Cheney and General Colin Powell, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, also visited an air base in western Saudi Arabia from where U.S. F-111 bombers have been raiding Iraq and Kuwait round the clock.

Mr. Cheney, who will report to President George Bush in Washington Monday, told members of the 48th tactical fighter wing they were part of a "highly successful" air campaign.

Gen. Powell and Mr. Cheney gave no hint when a ground

campaign might begin but Gen. Powell assured the emir that Iraqi troops would be pushed out of Kuwait.

"We told them (Iraqi troops) a few months ago to move it or lose it," Gen. Powell said. "They would not move it. Now they are going to lose it."

As he began his trip, Mr. Cheney said suggestions that a six-month air war alone could drive Iraq from Kuwait are misleading.

Although Mr. Cheney declined to say whether a ground war was "inevitable" — as the top British commander in Saudi Arabia had stated earlier in the day — his arguments indicated he believes it is a near certainty and will occur sooner rather than later. He did not say when.

"It's all one campaign," Mr. Cheney told reporters aboard his plane as he headed for Saudi Arabia. "We're thinking in terms

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Israel issues fresh threat to Palestinians

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinians got a new occupation chief Friday, and a warning that Israel would react sharply if they resumed their uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In Arab Jerusalem, two Palestinian youths attacked a post office guard with an ax, police said. The guard shot and wounded one assailant and police were looking for the second.

Israel Radio said the two men knocked at the post office door of Saladin Street, Arab Jerusalem's main street, and struck the guard with an ax when he opened the door. He was hospitalised with head wounds.

A senior officer, Fredy Zach, said Israel was easing the three-week-old curfew in the occupied territories and allowing Palestinians to return to their jobs. But he warned the move could be jeopardised if such incidents continued.

Arab Jerusalem does not come under the military government's authority, although it has become a focal point for the three-year-old intifada.

Police minister Roni Milo said Friday that the Palestinians from

the occupied territories would still not be allowed into the Tel Aviv region, Israel Radio said.

In a closed ceremony at the defence ministry, Major General Danny Rothchild, 44, head of the research division of Israel's military intelligence, was installed as head of the military government in the occupied territories.

He replaced Shmuel Goren who held the job for seven years. Goren, previously deputy of the Mossad intelligence agency, was criticised by Israeli leftists for failing to force the pressure that set off the intifada.

Since the curfew was imposed to pre-empt pro-Iraqi protests, a few incidents have been reported. Four Arabs have been reported killed by unknown assailants as alleged collaborators, and two died in Israeli gunfire.

The Dutch government said Friday it was deploying a Patriot missile battery to Israel to protect the Jewish state from attack by rockets.

The announcement came in a letter to parliaments by Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek and acting Defence Minister Jan Pronk.

Israel says 'infiltrators' shot dead

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Three

men slipped across the Israel-Jordan demarcation line Friday and attacked highway traffic in the southern desert, the military command said.

Four Israelis were wounded before soldiers killed the infiltrators, said Dan Shomron, the chief of staff.

It was the third reported assault from Jordan since the Gulf war.

Israel military forces have pounded pro-Iraqi Palestinians in Lebanon for launching Katyusha rockets that did not reach Israeli territory.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who said Thursday he was "very anxious" about Jordan's moves, reacted calmly to Friday's incident.

"I wouldn't say that this points to the future that will come after the war... I could imagine that after the war our borders will be completely quiet," Mr. Shamir said on Israel Radio.

The attackers went into action

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Washington willing to acknowledge Jordan's difficulties but little else

From Rania Atalla in Washington

ALTHOUGH fundamental disagreements exist between Jordan and the United States over the Gulf war, Washington is still willing to acknowledge that Amman has little choice in taking a public position.

Incongruent with that of the U.S., and although military and economic aid to Jordan is now "under review," State Department officials believe it will be a while before any decision is made on whether or not to cut aid off.

U.S. officials reacted strongly but cautiously to King Hussein's speech Wednesday evening, regretting what was perceived to be a public anti-U.S. stand, but also showing signs of understanding of the difficult circumstances Jordan faces.

"We try to understand the pressure the King is under, and he is under quite a bit of pressure," U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said before the Senate Foreign Relations Com-

mittee Thursday. However, "quite frankly, we find it sad that the King, committed in his rather long speech, any reference whatsoever... to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait... and to Iraq withdrawal."

Before White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said President George Bush saw the King's speech as siding with Iraq, another spokesman, Roman Popdick, said Mr. Bush made it clear, in his initial reaction to the King's speech, that the U.S. had to understand the King has "major internal difficulties" but that "that does not excuse him for making statements that go counter to the coalition effort."

Despite all that, Mr. Baker said the administration intends "to keep lines of communication open to the King, notwithstanding the fact that he is on the wrong side and (that we have a major disagreement here)." The secretary added that "when we look at alternatives, we don't see what we perceive to be a particularly pretty pic-

ture."

U.S. officials indicate that there were two schools of thought within the State Department, one which advocates a tougher stand towards Jordan because King Hussein "has not towed the line we want him to," and another — the more dominant school — which tends to be more understanding of the King's position and urges that the King's speech be seen in "the context" in which it was said.

Advocates of such thinking also look ahead for a role to be played by Jordan in any settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict once the Gulf war comes to an end.

In Congress, the reaction to King Hussein's speech was less understanding and much more critical of the Jordanian position. Congressional sources have described the mood on Capitol Hill as "extremely unhappy" at a minimum. Congressman Robert Torricelli, a

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No agreement yet with Syria on supplying oil

By P.V. Vivekanand Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Negotiations for importing Syrian oil to make up for the decline in Iraqi oil supply to Jordan have not yet produced final agreement, but Amman is hopeful that an accord could be reached with Damascus soon. At the same time, Jordan is also pursuing contacts with other potential suppliers, officials said.

"Contacts with Syria are continuing, but there is no definite indication yet when an agreement could be formalised," said a senior official.

The exact status of Jordan's strategic reserves of crude oil is not known. Earlier figures indicated they are sufficient for anywhere between six weeks to three months.

Other officials have said that Jordan was trying to revive Saudi oil supplies, cut off by Riyadh in September in what was seen as part of the economic pressure brought to bear upon Jordan for its position on the Gulf crisis.

"The best answer would be a resumption of the Saudi supply through Tapline," said another official. Libya and Iran are also potential suppliers, but such imports would cost higher than oil pumped through Tapline, the official noted.

However, officials said, there was no new contact with Saudi Arabia over the resumption of oil from there.

"Ideally, of course, our next best is Syria," from where oil could be trucked to the refinery near Zarqa, said the official.

According to oil experts, if Jordan manages to secure a daily supply of 30,000 barrels then the Kingdom would not face a fuel crunch since its consumption rate has gone down dramatically as a result of conservation measures adopted since early last year and the recently imposed curbs on use of private cars.

Early figures for 1990 indicated that Jordan was consuming 60,000 barrels of oil every day. This was brought down to

around 40,000 by December and declined further with the new measures.

Jordan's oil production is less than 600 barrels a day from the Hamzah wells near the border with Iraq. Gas has also been discovered in the nearby Rishah area, but present gas production is limited to the requirement for two 30-megawatt generating units there.

The quest for alternate sources was prompted by repeated attacks on Jordanian tankers carrying oil from Iraq to Jordan and damages done to Iraqi oil facilities by the allied bombardment leading to lower output and lower supplies.

Furthermore, officials also express concern that if the allied warplanes succeed in what is seen as a concerted bid to destroy the main Baghdad-Amman Highway and at least two other alternate roads then Iraqi oil supply to Jordan would be cut off completely.

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U.N. seeks image repair through humanitarian effort

By Sana Atiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The credibility of the United Nations has been questioned by Jordanians and Arabs since it endorsed a war on Iraq. Last week in an address to the nation, His Majesty King Hussein criticised the U.N. for not playing its proper role as peacemaker.

The King said: "The irony of this war is that it is waged under the cloak of international legitimacy and in the name of the U.N., which was created to preserve peace, security, justice and to resolve disputes through dialogue, negotiations and diplomacy. If this is an example of the future role of the U.N. in the new world order, what an ominous future lies before all nations."

This belief is shared by Jordanians, Palestinians and Arabs in general over what is seen as the double standards that were applied to the Kuwait

issue and the Palestinian problem where Security Council resolutions have not been implemented for more than 23 years.

Soon after the U.S.-led aggression on Iraq began, U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar expressed sadness that this war took place. After 10 resolutions zealously imposed on Iraq after its takeover of Kuwait on Aug. 2, the U.N. role, in the eyes of many, came to a standstill. Calls by several members of the Security Council to hold a formal session to discuss a ceasefire in the war have been ignored.

"We should not put too much importance on formalities," said Axel Wustenhagen, the new U.N. press coordination officer in Amman. "There are informal consultations going on concerning this in the past weeks."

In an interview with the Jordan Times, Mr. Wustenhagen said that the members of the

U.N. could not agree on a common ground for a plan of action, "so what is the point? to show that there is so much disagreement? There has to be the political will on their part to be serious."

Mr. Wustenhagen, who is now the official spokesman for all U.N. organisations, insisted that one must differentiate between the political body — the Security Council — and the humanitarian organisations of the U.N.

"We have to accept that the U.N. is an organisation of 150 member states that is dominated by five members of the Security Council," Mr. Wustenhagen said.

Observers here said that the work of the U.N. organisations in the region, mainly with evacuees from the war theatre was part of efforts to "patch up" the image of the U.N. after it endorsed a war on Iraq with Security Council Resolution 678, which allowed the use of

force on Iraq if it did not withdraw from Kuwait before Jan. 15.

"This is too serious to be part of a public relations (stunt) for the U.N.," Wustenhagen said. "While this tragedy (the war) is going on, not enough attention is being paid to humanitarian efforts. So we felt we should step up information on the human tragedy."

He added that the individuals in the Security Council were not the same people as those in the organisations, saying that individuals working in the U.N. secretariat shared the "same sentiments of sadness as that of Mr. Perez de Cuellar" over the war.

Mr. Wustenhagen asserted that the secretariat of the U.N. was not the body responsible for preventing the implementation of Security Council resolutions (on Palestine).

"Our role is to help as much as possible the individuals affected by disasters," one of

them being war, he said.

The U.N. spokesman said that there were preparations to send humanitarian aid to Iraqi civilians, reiterating that there was a difference between the Security Council and the humanitarian organisations.

"The secretary-general can only send U.N. troops or observers only when the Security Council gives him a mandate to do so. The Security Council decides a ceasefire, but we don't need a Security Council decision to send food and medicine to Iraq," Mr. Wustenhagen explained.

He added that there have to be physical assurances, however, that conditions were possible to send the necessary aid to Iraq with the absence of a formal ceasefire.

"We need Iraqi government approval to send the aid and guarantees that conditions are created whereby the food and medicine can be delivered," Mr. Wustenhagen said.

U.S. pilots have difficulty in locating targets

SAUDI ARABIA (AP) — After a three-week air war against Iraq and Kuwait, U.S. pilots say they are finding it increasingly difficult to locate prime targets.

Much of Iraq's armour remains hidden in bunkers and Iraqi ground forces are using decoys to fool allied pilots, said the commander at the largest U.S. air force base in Saudi Arabia.

"We have fewer targets than we did when we started," said Colonel Hal Hornburg, commander of the 4th tactical fighter wing provisional.

The wing flight commander, Col. Steve Plummer, said it was still easy to find targets, but "finding the kinds of targets we want is becoming more difficult." Iraq has buried most of its armour "making it difficult for us to locate it," said Plummer, Iraq "dog in very well."

Col. Hornburg was asked about reports that the Iraqis have been moving anti-aircraft batteries to the tops of civilian apartment buildings.

"My own personal feeling would be if a gun emplacement is firing at us from an apartment building, then that apartment building is part of a military target. In other words, the enemy has militarised a civilian area into a militarily significant target," he said.

As for the Iraqis' use of decoys to get pilots to waste their bombs, Col. Plummer — who flies F-16A Fighting Falcons — acknowledged that allied pilots have shot at decoys.

Col. Hornburg said U.S. pilots have sophisticated ways to tell a real target from a false target.

F-16A pilots, who have been pounding Iraq's elite Republican Guard units, said they have inflicted heavy damage despite reports the guard is so well dug in it remains an effective fighting force.

"It's one tank at a time," Col. Plummer said. The F-16As are equipped with two weapons specifically designed to kill tanks: The Maverick missile and the

Rockeye cluster bomb, which distributes armour-piercing bombs around a target.

Unlike the jungle in Vietnam, where equipment could be hidden, he said, it's "almost impossible to hide things in a desert. You can find them if you look for them."

"I would like to be able to leave the army to nothing but walking in there and picking up the pieces," said Col. Plummer. "Obviously that's idealistic and I'm sure we'll never get there. The army's going to have to go in eventually and do something."

"I would never discount the enemy's ability to fight back," Col. Hornburg said.

"If I thought that we were going to go in there and go through them like a hot knife through butter, I think that I would be leading our people astray and setting them up for a possible disaster. So, until this is over, I'm going to think of the enemy as a formidable fighting force," he said.

U.N. urges against revealing de Cuellar talks in Iraq

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The United Nations has urged Iraq not to press for publication of Baghdad's transcript of a meeting last month between Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar and President Saddam Hussein.

A U.N. spokesman said late Thursday that Iraq has asked for its notes on the talks to be circulated as an official U.N. document and that they were being translated from Arabic into the organisation's other official languages.

But he said publication would be "an unprecedented and serious breach of diplomatic procedure, since it would threaten the confidentiality of diplomatic exchanges."

At the same time other U.N. sources said they had seen parts of the transcript, which they contended were not embarrassing to the secretary general.

Saddam Hussein was to have said that the United Nations was dominated by the United States

to which Mr. Perez de Cuellar is said to have responded, "they don't dominate me."

The sources said another section had the secretary general agreeing with the Iraqi president's contention that Washington had broken an agreement with the United Nations by refusing landing rights for Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz's plane when he wanted to address the General Assembly last October.

"None of this is so controversial, so we are puzzled as to why the transcripts should be released," one source said.

The U.N. spokesman, citing principle, told reporters Iraq's U.N. mission had been asked to reconsider its request and the matter was being referred back to Baghdad.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar met President Saddam in the Iraqi capital on Jan. 13 in an attempt to persuade him to withdraw from Kuwait, two days before the expiration of a Security Council

deadline authorising the use of force to eject Iraq.

Iraqi sources have hinted to reporters that publication of the transcript could prove embarrassing to the secretary general, with whom Baghdad has been feuding over his role in the Gulf crisis.

An Arab source said Iraq's U.N. mission was meanwhile preparing its own translation of the transcript into English, in case the mission decided to circulate it as an Iraqi press release instead of having it published as a U.N. document.

Iraq caused some embarrassment last year when it leaked the transcript of a meeting that President Saddam held with U.S. Ambassador to Iraq April Glaspie shortly before the invasion of Kuwait.

Part of the exchange was interpreted by some critics of U.S. policy as giving Iraq a green light to send its troops into the emirate.

"Purifying Security Council

Intoning a Japanese chant, a parapsychology group attempted to "purify" the U.N. Security Council chambers, scene of 12 resolutions against Iraq, including authorisation of the Gulf war.

About 20 members of several nationalities belonging to the Tokyo-based Mahikari group walked around the empty horseshoe-shaped conference table late Wednesday, chanting in unison and raising their hands slightly.

A spokesman for the group's New York chapter told Reuters the purpose was to "purify the chamber and give it spiritual energy."

"It needs it," said a Cuban diplomat after being told of the ritual.

The Mahikari spokesman said the last time such a ceremony was performed in the council chambers was on Aug. 1, a day before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Mitterrand against major allied occupation of Iraq, use of chemicals

PARIS (AP) — President Francois Mitterrand has flatly rejected using nuclear, chemical or biological weapons against Iraq and renewed his call for a Middle East peace conference — positions somewhat at odds with U.S. policies.

Mr. Mitterrand Thursday also ruled out occupation of large chunks of Iraq's territory.

His remarks in a 15-minute interview with four French television journalists were his first on the Gulf war since Jan. 20, when he said French forces would not limit their attacks to Kuwait.

Mr. Mitterrand made one prediction in the interview that U.S. and other military officials in the multinational force allied against Iraq generally agree with: That the allies will mount a ground offensive this month.

But his other statements went further than Washington has gone in defining what the allies should not or will not do to defeat Iraq.

After one journalist noted that U.S. officials had not ruled out using nuclear weapons in the event of a non-conventional attack on allied forces, Mr. Mitterrand said: "I rule it out. Neither chemical arms, nor bacteriological, nor nuclear arms. To engage in arms of this type would be a descent toward a barbarism that I refuse."

A post-war settlement should be organised by the United Nations, Mr. Mitterrand said. He reiterated his longstanding call for a peace conference to solve the Middle East's problems, including Lebanon and the Israeli-Palestinian dispute.

Mr. Mitterrand's aims are somewhat at odds with a post-war plan proposed Wednesday by U.S. Secretary of State James

Baker who avoided references to an international peace conference.

Mr. Mitterrand said any settlement must include respect for internationally recognised borders and national sovereignty, a global arms control plan, mutual security guarantees and a workable regional balance of power.

"We must not fool ourselves," Mr. Mitterrand said. "It's the Security Council that should organise the return to peace."

He also said he wants to stick to the goal of removing Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

"Once we've liberated Kuwait, we'll have done most of the job we set out to do," he said. "I don't want this to turn into a war covering all of Iraq's territory, with all that implies in terms of occupying towns, resistance movements and day-to-day fighting by other means."

The French president said he did not fear an international escalation of the conflict, as Baghdad has apparently hoped to achieve by attempting to draw Israel and possibly Iran into the war.

"I don't believe for one second that this could degenerate into another world war," Mr. Mitterrand said. But "if we hadn't acted now, we would have found ourselves in the conditions of conflict that could have risked one."

Also Thursday, French Defence Minister Pierre Joxe said in a radio interview that the three-week-old war has killed thousands. He did not specify civilian or military casualties.

Mr. Joxe also said French troops would be on the front lines once the ground offensive begins. France has nearly 12,000 men in the Gulf region.

Amnesty warns of rights abuses in wartime

LONDON (AP) — Human rights have come under attack in the Gulf war, Amnesty International said Friday, expressing concern about actions taken by Britain, the United States and Middle Eastern countries.

The human rights group announced it had appealed to Iraq to treat prisoners humanely and had sought gas masks for prisoners and detainees in the occupied territories.

Amnesty International said was interested solely in "the protection of fundamental human rights" and had not taken a position on the Gulf war.

"In times of war, governments often tend to sweep human rights aside in the name of political or military expediency," Amnesty International said in a written statement.

"They are also selective in the human rights violations they condemn — those of their enemies

are loudly criticised while those of their allies are overlooked."

In recent weeks, Amnesty International has advised Britain that it considers the detention of more than 50 Iraqis and Palestinians to be "contrary to international standards."

The detainees have not been told specifically why they are being held and do not have the right to a fair judicial hearing or legal representation, the group said.

Amnesty International said it believes some of the detainees may be in custody solely because of their nationality and others may be prisoners of conscience.

A British spokesman for the Home Office said Thursday night that all detainees have the right of appeal to a panel. The spokesman, speaking anonymously, said the detainees were allowed the advice of a friend, who could be a lawyer.

Amnesty International said it is investigating human rights violations related to the Gulf war and monitoring reported moves to expel Arabs and refugees from various nations on national security grounds.

Members of Amnesty International have written to Iraq, urging leaders not to subject prisoners to "torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment during the war."

It also expressed concern about Iraq's "human shield" policy of placing prisoners at military targets in an attempt to block allied attacks on strategic locations.

Amnesty International expressed concern about Israel's use of guns to enforce a curfew imposed on the occupied territories. It also objected to summary trials given to those accused of violating the curfew.

The group has issued an urgent

appeal on behalf of two Egyptian prisoners. An opposition journalist who spoke against the war at a Cairo mosque and a doctor whose publishing company reportedly published a critical statement by the Egyptian medical syndicate both remain in custody, it said.

Amnesty International also wrote to the Saudi Arabia, expressing concern that suspects arrested in connection with an attack on a bus carrying U.S. and Saudi Arabian military personnel may receive the death penalty. Several servicemen were slightly injured in the attack.

Amnesty International is opposed to the death penalty.

Reports from Cairo indicate that an unknown number of people have been detained after they voiced opposition to Egypt's involvement in the war against Iraq. Egyptian opposition parties have called for a general strike to voice their protest.

Allied forces threaten Saudi culture — church leader

CANBERRA (R) — Several senior Saudi government officials believe it was a mistake to invite allied forces into their country because their presence was a threat to Saudi culture, the president of the World Council of Churches said on Friday.

"I was told by the Saudis that they do not want the allied presence in their country," Metropolitan Paulus Mar Gregorius told a news conference at the council's seventh assembly.

"They had asked for it because they were threatened by an invasion by Iraq but now they are convinced that was not the original intention and that they made a mistake — but they cannot say that," Gregorius said.

Gregorius, from the Malankara orthodox Syrian church of India, said he visited Saudi Arabia and held talks with the country's deputy foreign minister in November.

The visit was part of a Middle East tour which also involved talks with government officials in Iraq and Jordan.

"The deputy foreign minister of Saudi Arabia said he and some of his colleagues thought it was a mistake to invite the allied forces into their country."

"They were worried that the presence of a 500,000-strong force would endanger their culture," Gregorius told Reuters after the conference.

"And I am sure there is much support within the Saudi community for that thinking."

Gregorius said the message he gleaned from his Middle East visit was that many Arabs believed Iraq was becoming too strong in the region and needed to be cut down to size.

"They see Iraq after the eight-year war with Iran emerging as

the most technologically advanced nation among the Arabs and militarily also the most powerful," he said.

Many Arabs believed the United States used the Gulf crisis to support its armaments industry and to gain a new military presence in the region.

"It is true the end of the cold war brought down the demand in the market for armaments and this in turn has affected the U.S. economy substantially... the way out of the recession was to increase the market for armaments. That purpose has been served by this conflict," Gregorius said.

"The allied powers, having had dominions in that area in the past, are anxious to get into the act and be there in the Middle East as a major actor and to crush Iraq."

Gregorius called for an immediate Iraqi withdrawal from

Kuwait linked with an allied withdrawal from Saudi Arabia and convening of a Middle East conference.

He said the conference would tackle not only the Iraq-Kuwait problem but also the question of a Palestinian homeland and the disputes between Greece, Turkey and Cyprus, and between Lebanon and Syria.

The World Council of Churches represents 316 churches, excluding the Roman Catholic, Jewish and Muslim faiths. It meets every seven years to formulate religious policy. The assembly runs from Feb. 7 to 20.

Gregorius said he met with Saudi and exiled Kuwaiti officials a month before the outbreak of the Gulf war. He reported he was told that Arabs believe the United States is involved in the conflict for its own political, economic and military interests, not

for its stated goal of creating a new world order that would pave the way for a lasting peace.

Moves towards East-West reconciliation had hurt the U.S. economy from declining demand for armaments, while a decreased communist presence in the Middle East left Washington eager for a reason to maintain a military force in the region, he said.

And even though Arab countries are participating in the allied contingent fighting Iraq, many Arabs still see the conflict as anti-Muslim, Gregorius said.

He said the Saudis first asked for allied military forces because they feared Iraq might invade their country after taking over Kuwait. He said that a deputy foreign minister from Saudi Arabia, who he did not name, told him that some Saudis now feel "they made a mistake but cannot say so."

Gregorius said a lasting peace in the Middle East must be based on several points:

— Iraq must leave Kuwait.

— Allied troops must leave Arab soil.

— A Middle East conference must be held to reach a comprehensive solution to the Palestinian issue and other regional conflicts between Iraq and Kuwait, Lebanon and Syria, and Turkey and Greece.

— Israel and its neighbours must learn to cooperate.

One of the goals of the council assembly will be to debate and formulate a solution to ending the war that will be acceptable to the world community, Gregorius said.

"That is why our statement has not as much teeth as we would wish," he said.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

PRAYER TIMES

06:43 Fajr
06:22 (Sunrise) Duha
11:50 Dhuhur
14:51 'Asr
17:18 Maghrib
18:57 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedieh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Saie Church Tel. 661757
Terzian Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Epiphanius Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be partly cloudy.

Amman Min./Max. temp. 3 / 10
Aqaba 10 / 19
Deserts 2 / 13
Jordan Valley 8 / 17
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 8, Aqaba 17. Humidity readings: Amman 96 per cent, Aqaba 41 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Kayed Halayqa 793522
Dr. Fakhri Tayeh 885880
Dr. Mahmoud Azam 819925
Dr. Mohammad Al Sawra 732056
Firdous pharmacy 78236
Al Asma pharmacy 637655
Nairookh pharmacy 626672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

IRBID:
Dr. Nabil Abdul Ols (—)

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence immediate 630461
Rescue 630461
Civil Defence Emergency 159
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 893090
Public Security Department 630221

HOTEL COMPLAINTS

Price Complaints 605800
Water and Sewerage 661176
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 771111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-52300
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-52300

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn. 640281/6
Abdali Maternity, J. Amn. 64241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 663271/7
Al-Muhsin Hospital 845845
The Islamic, Abdali 66727/9
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajir 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marfa 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 60224050
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09/983323
Zarqa National Hospital 09/991071
Ibn Sina Hospital 09/986732

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al-Nafis Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)52200-5, where it should always be verified.

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in file per kg.
Apple 550 / 480

Banana 500 / 450
Banana (Muskammar) 450 / 400
Beans 500 / 450
Cabbage 100 / 80
Carrot 220 / 150
Cauliflower 300 / 250
Cucumbers (large) 150 / 100
Cucumbers (small) 300 / 250
Dates 500 / 400
Eggplant 200 / 150
Garlic 1600 / 1000
Lemon 220 / 180
Marrow (large) 150 / 100
Marrow (small) 320 / 280
Onion (dry) 270 / 220
Onion (green) 180 / 120
Okra 600 / 500
Orange 500 / 200
Pepper (hot) 350 / 300
Pepper (sweet) 180 / 120
Potato 230 / 180
Radish 100 / 50
Sage 400 / 300
Spinach 150 / 100
Tomatoes 180 / 120

Endangering water treatment

Bombardment cuts supply of chlorine

By Narmeen Miral
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The allied forces bombing of the Baghdad-Ai Ruweish highway has halted the shipment of chlorine to Jordan leaving the country stranded with enough supplies for only a month after which drinking water in the Kingdom may be considered unfit for human consumption.

According to sources in the government as well as water specialists, shipments of chlorine, originally imported from Kuwait and Iraq after the Aug. 2 invasion, stopped after the first day of bombardment of the highway on Feb. 5.

"The last shipment we managed to get was on that first day the road was attacked," a government source, who preferred anonymity told the Jordan Times.

"Since then we officially requested from Turkey to provide us with the substance but our request was denied," the source added.

Jordan originally manufactured chlorine at a factory in Jordan but the production at the factory stopped "when it became evident that it was becoming contaminated with mercury." The factory at Awajan, 15 kilometres north-east of Amman, produced both chlorine and mercury.

Plans were underway to build another factory for the production of the disinfecting substance "and we made arrangements to import chlorine from Kuwait till that time," the sources noted.

After the Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait, Jordan began to import the substance from Iraq "against the country's debt to Jordan."

Government officials contacted over efforts to find another source for the substance only said that supplies of chlorine were expected to arrive in Jordan within a week.

The sources said that the substance was secured through "a trade agreement between Jordanian and Turkish businessmen." They did not elaborate but implied that chlorine was being imported through individuals rather than an official level.

According to Dr. Elias Salameh, a leading Jordanian water specialist, chlorine "is an agent for disinfection of water and is instrumental in eradicating some types of warm eggs."

"If chlorine is not added to the water, the consumer would receive water that holds disease-carrying bacteria," Salameh said in a telephone interview with the Jordan Times.

He further added that the risk of spread of diseases would be evident because Jordan depends largely on underground water "which under such an expanded system of water distribution could be mixed with leaked water from cesspools and sewage lines."



ALLAH AKBAR: Thousands jam downtown Amman calling for Jihad against Israel, the allied powers and Arab 'tails' (Photo by Yusef Al Allan)

Demonstrations by children, Islamists vent anger on U.S., United Nations and Israel

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Over two thousand Jordanian children marched under the rain towards the UNDP headquarters in central Shmeisani district Friday in a show of support for Iraq.

Walking from the union building to the UNDP headquarters and chanting pro-Iraq slogans, children aged 3 to 16 waved Iraqi, Jordanian and Palestinian flags. Accompanied by about 150 parents, the children demonstrated for a good hour and a half under the rain.

As evidence of an ever increasing politicisation of Jordanian society and an increasing dismay about the failure of the United Nations to avoid a war in the Gulf, placards carried by the children declared that "we need another Hammarskjöld" referring to former United Nations general secretary Dag Hammarskjöld.

"Security Council" or destructive council?" declared yet another placard referring to the ineffectiveness of the U.N. in preventing the war.

Venting their anger at mostly the United States but also Israel the children burned an Israeli flag to the applause of their fellow students.

Most of the children attending the demonstration Friday attend private schools that have held fund-raising events to aid Iraqi children since a U.N.-sponsored economic embargo on Iraq has made even the importation of basic medicines and foodstuffs to Iraq difficult if not impossible.

"There is no fear there is no fear, neither from Bush nor from Gorbachev as long as Saddam is here," chanted one group of students, ridiculing the fall of the Soviet superpower.

"The Russians are now the tail of America and Israel," declared one student.

The strong antipathy felt towards Israel and its occupation of Arab lands for 40 years took equal footing in slogans which hailed Iraqi resistance to allied attacks.

"Oh Arabs do not fear as long as Saddam is here," is how one slogan went. In view of the ever increasing attacks against Iraq by

the allied powers posters reading "make peace not war" were drowned out pro-Iraqi sentiments.

"Every time the allies hit Iraq we become more pro-Iraq," is how 12 year old Tony put it. "Every time the Americans hit Iraq we pray that Iraq hits Tel Aviv, because the Israelis are behind all this and they must be punished," he continued.

"If it is part of the new world order that Arab children die then let it be that it is part of our order that Israeli children die... it is an eye for an eye," said one mother. "May be once the Israelis know that we will and can hit back, they will decide to give us our rights and live with us in peace," she continued.

Commenting on the change of attitude of "upper class Jordanians," one long time Australian resident of Amman told the Jordan Times: "Things have really changed in Jordan. I can't believe all these bourgeois Jordanians are letting their little darlings shout

and demonstrate in the streets... and while it's raining."

Shortly after the children's demonstration came to an end the Jihad Al Islami Belt Al Maqdes (a hard line Islamic group which is based but has an unknown constituency in Jordan) held a demonstration across town in Jabal Al Nathif.

In a sermon given by pro-Jihad sheikhs the group called for a holy war against Israel, the allied powers and their Arab "tails."

While attendance was initially poor, up to 10,000 people finally joined the demonstrators to march towards downtown Amman.

A leaflet in English and Arabic was distributed to those in attendance. Addressed to "Bush" the message read: "You have to pull out your force from our land, you have to stop supporting our enemies otherwise you will face something you have never heard about... it is based on what we believe... Al Jihad — victory or martyrdom."



INNOCENCE: Hundreds of children defy cold weather on their way to U.N. offices in Shmeisani to show their dismay at the ineffectiveness of the United Nations in preventing war (photo by Yusef Al Allan).

More drivers volunteer to truck oil from Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — At least 23 drivers have submitted applications to the Public Transport Corporation (PTC) and the Ministry of Transport to assume the task of driving tankers carrying crude oil from Iraq to Jordan, according to a statement by PTC Thursday.

The applications came in the wake of a statement by Transport and Telecommunication Minister Jamal Saraireh welcoming people wishing to join the team of drivers for the job.

The drivers seem to be encouraged by the incentives offered by the government and motivated by the national feeling to carry out a duty for the homeland, commented one observer.

Saraireh paid tribute to volunteer drivers whom, he said, have displayed their true national affiliation and readiness to help their country in times of need.

Prime Minister Mudar Badran said in a statement earlier this week that the government has insured all trucks commuting between Iraq and Jordan and was offering incentives to those drivers wishing to go to Baghdad to drive the crude oil tankers to Jordan.

and labourers from the Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions Thursday staged a march in Amman in protest against continued air raids on Jordanian oil tankers along the Amman-Baghdad international highway which resulted in the death of seven drivers and the injury of 11 others as well as the destruction of 31 trucks over the past weeks.

The marchers, who carried posters condemning the raids and portraits of His Majesty King Hussein and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, handed a memorandum of protest to the resident representative of the United Nations in Amman, Dr. Ali Atiga, addressed to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the memorandum demanded that the United Nations provide protection to civilians travelling along roads, to the children of Iraq and to the civilian vehicles which were constantly subjected to U.S. and other allied forces raids.

The memorandum demanded that the U.N. secretary-general exert his power to preserve the U.N. organisation's credibility and to act by the U.N. charter

and the various international conventions.

It also demanded that Security Council resolution 678, that paved the way for the ongoing aggression on Iraq, be cancelled and that peace talks start to end the crisis.

Many of those carrying posters were children of the drivers killed in the raids along the Amman-Baghdad route.

Following the march, the federation members held a press conference during which Mahmoud Hazzallah, who heads the Union of Drivers of Land Transport Vehicles, addressed the press.

The Jordanian drivers are determined to continue the process of transporting Iraqi crude oil to Jordan despite the brutal attacks on their vehicles, Hazzallah said.

Hazzallah refuted all the allegations given by the allied forces for their raids on the highway which, he said, had no military installations and where only civilian means of transport move.

One of the drivers, Mohammad Adria, said that Israeli planes took part in raids on the oil tanker trucks heading for Jordan.

King's national address draws massive support

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein's nation-wide address Wednesday evening, marking the start of the fourth week of the Gulf war, has drawn support for the Kingdom's policies from parliamentarians and Jordanian citizens and organisations.

Both speakers of the Upper and Lower houses of Parliament expressed full backing for the King's call for a ceasefire to pave the way for peace negotiations.

"Your address represented the conscience of the nation in the face of the barbaric onslaught against the Arab people of Iraq and their cultural heritage," said Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament, Abdul Latif Arabiyat, in a cable to the King.

"The war followed a conspiracy that has been hatched against peace and designed to destroy Iraq's military and economic might," the cable said. "The representatives of the people in Parliament support your brave and courageous stand and the stand of the Iraqi people now defending their national soil," added the cable.

The Upper House voices its absolute support for the King's

initiative for a ceasefire to help end the conflict imposed on the Arabs and Muslims, said Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament, Ahmad Al Lawzi in his cable to the King.

He said that the "Jordanian people cannot but express their pride in your leadership and support your peaceful endeavours."

Palestine ambassador to Jordan, Al Tayyeh Abdul Rahim, voiced the Palestinian people's full backing for the King's efforts; and in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, he said the speech shed light on all aspects of the ongoing aggression on Iraq.

The Palestinian people under occupation, the ambassador said highly appreciate the King's endeavours for Palestine and support his effort to bring the war to an end.

The Arab Youth Forum (AYF) also expressed appreciation and pride in His Majesty and pledged to stand united behind his wise leadership.

In its cable, the AYF said Jordanian youth would serve as a strong front in the face of any conspiracy being hatched against Jordan to force it to change its Arab stand.

The forum said that it was an honour for the people of Jordan to pay the price of the noble and honest stand at a time when others are receiving the financial rewards of their suspicious and dubious stands.

The cable described the King's speech as an important document and a pledge that has enlivened the hearts and awakened the nation.

The Professional Association Council hailed the honourable principle of King Hussein and pledged in rally behind his wise leadership in defending the homeland and the nation.

In a cable to His Majesty, the council said the King's speech was a true reflection of the positions and aspirations of the Jordanian people.

The various professional associations highly appreciate the pan-Arab stand Jordan has adopted, under the leadership of King Hussein, the cable said.

Cable of support to the King also came from the Agriculture Engineers Association, the Jordanian community in Australia, among other organisations and citizens.



Souvenir: A crowd packs the main hall of Al-Wihdat Club to take part in the auction for a wing (right) of a downed U.S. jet.

Wing of downed U.S. jet fetches \$33,000 in auction

By Serene Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — More than 4,000 people gathered at Al-Wihdat Club Thursday to attend an "unusual" auction for the piece of a wing of an American plane shot down by Iraqi fire over Trebeil. After four hours of bidding, the wing was sold for JD 21,515 (\$33,000) to Wael Qasrawi, a Jordanian merchant.

The bidding started at 7:10 p.m. with an opening bid of JD 1,000. Throughout the auction, the audience shouted anti-American and pro-Iraqi slogans as the bidding price kept rising.

The atmosphere that prevailed throughout the auction was that of total support to Iraq, its leader and people, and the unity between the Jordanian, Palestinian and Iraqi people.

"From the children of Jerusalem and Haifa, from the children of the intifada (uprising) to the children of Iraq with our deepest love," and "from the children of Jabal Al-Nar (mountain of fire) to the children of Iraq's Jabal Al-Nar," the bidders shouted during the auction.

Some participants who took part in the auction included Al Wihdat Club, who bid up to JD 15,000. Other bidders included two Egyptians, and a Saudi among others.

The 1.5 metre, 35 kilogramme wing, was part of a downed F-16 American jet. The wing was placed in a box with a sign written on it "part of a wing of an American plane made in New York, financed by Saudi Arabia, shot down in Trebeil — on the Jordanian-Iraqi border — by Iraqi missiles."

The club's administrative committee has decided to hold an auction, in order to gather donations.

An advertisement about the auction in the local newspapers excluded the participation of ambassadors of countries which helping to the American-led aggression against Iraq.

The money, collected during the auction of the wing of the plane which was referred to as "Bush's plane," was placed in a trophy cup and would be donated to help the children and people of Iraq.

According to a club source, two pieces of the downed American plane were picked up by drivers of a convoy who were on their way back from Baghdad after they delivered food and milk donated by the club to the Iraqi people.

The club's administrative committee has decided to hold an auction, in order to gather donations.

An advertisement about the auction in the local newspapers excluded the participation of ambassadors of countries which helping to the American-led aggression against Iraq.

Jordan, EC formalise \$200m grant

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan and the European Community (EC) have signed an agreement providing for a European grant of \$200 million for the Kingdom to help it offset damages to the national economy resulting from the Gulf crisis.

The agreement comes one week after the EC decision in Brussels to grant the \$200 million to Jordan.

The signing of the agreement underlines the importance which the EC attaches to the quick disbursement of the funds, according to an EC statement issued Thursday in Amman.

It said that the funds were to be utilised for the import, by the private or public sectors of industrial raw and auxiliary materials as well as semi-manufactured industrial equipment and agricultural machinery and spare parts and accessories in addition to chemical products, in particular fertilisers, plant protection agents, pesticides, medicines and other industrial products of importance for national economic development in Jordan.

It said that the funds will be available through the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) which will make the foreign exchange available through proper channels with the commercial banks in Jordan.

Brotherhood wins Iran's total support for Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation representing the Muslim Brotherhood returned home Friday from Tehran after a five-day visit to Iran during which the delegation members met with senior Iranian officials.

The visit was within the course of the Brotherhood's endeavours to gather support for Iraq in the face of aggression.

The delegation, which was led by the head of the movement in Jordan, Mohammad Abdul Rahim Khalifa, met with the Iranian spiritual leader Imam Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who affirmed Iran's keen interest in bolstering Jordanian-Iranian relations.

Khamenei expressed Iran's readiness to defend Jordan, which he said stands on the longest confrontation line with the Israeli enemy, if it was attacked.

The delegation also held a meeting with the Iranian Shura (consultative council) Speaker Ayatollah Karubi, who called for unifying Muslims' ranks "to confront the world's colonialist powers."

Karubi stressed that Iran will defend Jordan's sovereignty and security if it was threatened.

In a statement issued Friday following the visit, Khalifa described the visit as fruitful.



NOTE AND APOLOGY

A mistake was made in the Medecins Du Monde's advertisement in English published at the Jordan Times of Feb. 7. The following paragraph was inadvertently missing from the English text:

"This same duty commands us to intervene for the 'civilian victims of the war in Iraq, in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.'" However, the French advertisement was published in full.

There it should hereby be noted.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.
Established 1975
الجزيرة الأردنية السياسية المستقلة المنشورة بالإنجليزية

Chairman of the Board of Directors:
MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:
MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.
Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 661242

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Body less soul

ABDUL HAMID Sharaf, Jordan's late prime minister, "at times... saw America as a dinosaur, small of brain and body of body, whose embrace could be smothering even for its friends."

This is probably a time, when the brilliant politician, had he lived on, would have seen in the U.S. not an extinct monster but a soulless military machine that distinguishes not a friend from foe, that will stop at nothing short of its weapons' range.

George Bush is angry at us because King Hussein spoke his mind, and expressed beliefs strongly held by Jordanians. The U.S. president has even instructed his administration to review financial aid for Jordan, as if to punish us.

Message received loud and clear. But what we would like to tell the Americans is that we do not want their money if we have to pay back with dignity and honour. And we certainly do not need to be the recipient of blood money.

President Bush has been mistaken about a number of assumptions that he has made on this war. He has taken the wrong course of action. And, for all we know, he might still not know on which day Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese. Our memory, however, is not so short or so selective as to pretend that we have not become a U.S. target. Mr. Bush, even as a friend of our King, has not been able to absorb why Jordan is doing what it is doing and why it is taking the line it is taking. Even though we thank him for understanding "pressures" we are facing, he nevertheless should also know that friendship is a two-way street, and, better still, that no-one can claim monopoly on truth and morality.

"I beseech you by the bowels of Christ," someone once said, "to think it possible you may be mistaken." These words may have been the message contained in King Hussein's address to President Bush. We really do not know for sure. But we assume that there was, in the King's speech, more than one message directed to more than one person.

First and foremost, His Majesty talked about history, and most probably wanted to impress upon people all over the world that this war is wrong. Those who do learn from mistakes of the past are doomed to repeat them. Then, the argument about how fair and just Bush's war on Iraq can be taken to any length one wants to stretch it.

Jordan's position has been laid clearly and strongly on the table. It is what we believe in, and as such it is not subject to TRUE or NOT TRUE judgements. President Bush and his administration have opted to treat their political ill, myopia and schizophrenia, with the heat of war and sight of bloodshed and destruction. But if the disease spreads, they should not blame the Jordanians.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

PRESIDENT Bush is not happy at seeing Jordan on good terms with Iraq or supporting its sister state; and this is natural because it was he and his allies who aborted an Arab-Arab solution to the Gulf crisis that could have been settled through the efforts of Arab countries themselves in an amicable atmosphere, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Friday. Commenting on President Bush's rejection of King Hussein's call for a ceasefire, the paper said that the president's reaction to "... I came as a disappointment to many nations which wished that a ceasefire could pave the ground for peace. What President Bush said about the king's initiative is really sad, especially in view of Washington's admission that the war would be long and hard and that many would die in the coming ground battles, the paper noted. Bush seems to have become determined to abort the aspirations and hopes of millions of peace loving people of the world by rejecting such a call for peace and by pursuing the conflict which would cause many sufferings to American families, the paper added. Bush has to understand, said the paper, that Jordan's relations with Iraq is not based on a selfish axis, hostile to other Arab countries in the region, and if Bush believes that Jordan and Iraq are in alliance, it is clear for all nations that such an alliance is aimed at achieving peace and ending the conflict and not for other purposes. The paper said that both Amman and Baghdad believe that international legitimacy should be applied on equal terms and with the same criteria to all issues plaguing the Middle East region.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily criticizes the government's decision to exempt members of the lower and upper houses of parliament from the recent measures intended to save gasoline. Salah Abdul Samad says that out of all sectors parliament members have been singled out to be exempted from driving their cars on alternate days like the other ordinary citizens of Jordan and this is not fair at all. Abdul Samad says the government's decision in this respect has caused dismay and dissatisfaction since Jordanian citizens who had hoped that the senators and deputies would not accept any favours and would want to be treated like the other citizens in a show of solidarity and not of a feeling of national belonging with the aim of cutting down on fuel consumption. Is the exemption a necessary measure to improve the parliamentary process in Jordan, or is it aimed at helping the deputies to go round visiting and inspecting their constituencies? asks Abdul Samad. If the deputies cannot live the war other citizens live and do not bear the same responsibilities how do they expect to serve the people? says the writer. He wonders what these deputies would tell the voters in the coming elections and how they can give an acceptable explanation for these exemptions which tend to help them live better off than the others. If exemptions are to be given, Abdul Samad notes, these should go to doctors who can save patients' lives, as doctors noble missions are by far more important to the nation than the well-being of parliament members.

VIEW FROM AMMAN

A call for peace, from Amman of the Arabs

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein speech on Wednesday evening, February 6, 1991, was another attempt by a responsible leader to insert a sense of sanity in the developing tragedy that is currently being acted out in the Gulf region. Once again and in a characteristic manner, King Hussein displayed not only eight but vision as well. From the beginning, as well as now he could have taken the easy way out, and like others in the region, joined the ranks in the chant calling for a "kill" of Iraq. Neither his vision of the aftermath to come, nor his nationalistic stance, nor his noble heritage would allow him to take the easy way out. The fortieth generation in the line of the Hashemite house, once again took the honourable, though difficult position expected of a leader with determination and foresight. What is taking place is not the so-called "liberation" of Kuwait, nor is it even the securing of Western interests in the area, but something else, above and beyond these two goals. It is the total destruction of Iraq. In his words "... it is also aimed at Iraq's right to a life of freedom and dignity, and its determination to fulfill its historic, cultural and human role which started in Babylon, Baghdad and Basra and which contributed to human civilisation, scientific progress and culture."

On the regional level, the destruction of Iraq has other motives behind it. Not only to benefit Israel — in as much as this is no more than another Arab-Israeli battle fought by proxy on behalf of Israel by the so-called allied forces — but to "... rearrange the area in a manner for more dangerous ... than the Sykes-Picot agreement. This rearrangement would put the nation, its aspirations and its resources under direct foreign hegemony..."

On the international level the King's analysis of what is truly going on, was no less perceptive. "Where is the United Nations?" he asked, and what of the new world order that is now advocated.

The drums of war and the din of Western propaganda, Zionised beyond belief, has surrounded this latest modern imperial crusade with the thick fog of half truths and blatant lies that no human eye could penetrate. With fantastic precision, paying lip service to form though devoid of substance, the United Nations became a mere tool cloaking the evil intention with the thin facade of international legitimacy. Indeed what an "ominous future" lies before us when the United Nations too has become so overtly another section of the United States Department of State moving like an automaton to the tune and beat of the Shamans and the Shamirs and the Kissingers of Israel.

This call, from this "Hashemite Arab" will hopefully awaken a sense of response from what it calls "honest Arabs" wherever these may be. It is the more meaningful in that it is essentially a call of peace and not a cry of war. It is also a warning that should Iraq be slaughtered, others in the area, even those counted in the ranks of the "allies" will soon follow suit. For a while the eyes of the world and those of some of the Arabs are riveted on the commotion taking place along the Saudi-Iraqi-Kuwaiti frontier, other sacrifices are already being prepared for the Israeli altar. Even the calves now fattened will not be allowed to escape no matter how well they currently behave. Ultimately none will escape and in time each will have his day. Thousands of Jews are currently flowing into Israel from the Soviet Union alone, while the Zionist organisation is already debating the fate of the thirty million or so Jews of the world. Should they be ingathered? When and how?

His Majesty's speech, emanating from an anguished heart was not an abandonment of his moderate centrist and rational approach. We stand by Iraq and against the destruction of its people and way of life unequivocally, not because Iraq is right in its occupation of Kuwait, but because we understand the situation

in its totality both historical and geographic. The magician's distraction in the Gulf does not hide from our vision what a truly happening.

With amazing precision and a more amazing sense of timing a herd mentality was caused to develop not only regionally but internationally as well. The slight of hand while superb has not hidden either the real motive nor the actions on the ground. The King is calling on Jordan's friends throughout the world, west and east, north and south, to heed the peaceful call. For it is not the military might of Jordan that has weight but its political resource of good-will and sensible humane relations with others. The timing of the call as well as its content are meaningful too. Jordan does not want to be engulfed or involved, but at the same time it is a warning signal that what is going on must stop, otherwise the conflict may spread.

And while trying to take the initiative — taken out of Arab hands since the crisis began on August 2, 1990 — by making Jordan's position so clear cut, Jordan is — at the same time — saying that it wishes to remain a valid interlocutor for peace now and in the future. This explains the King's salute to His Holiness Pope John Paul II.

Neither Jordan, nor Iraq nor any of the Arabs are enemies of the West, either by choice or temperament. Should this call be heeded a speedy reconciliation would soon follow.

Significantly, His Majesty did not mention the name of President Saddam Hussein even once, as if to emphasise that the real attack is on the entire Iraqi people and not simply on their president alone.

It is also well to remember that Iraq has thus far, and in spite of all the vilification and demonisation of its people and people, has conducted a clean war. Please do not push it the other way. There is still room for a peaceful political settlement.

The U.S. ironies in the Gulf

By Barry Schwed
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The United States, planning for a postwar Middle East, is prepared to help Iraq's recovery and to reverse course by making the Soviet Union a partner in the search for a settlement to the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Considering aid to Iraq while bombing the country relentlessly may seem odd. Admitting Moscow to the peace process in the Middle East is a major policy change.

Ever since Egypt and Syria, armed by Moscow, gave Israel a scare in the 1973 Yom Kippur war, U.S. policy has aimed at excluding the Soviets from influencing the outcome of negotiations.

The Soviets kept a hand in Syria, armistice Hafez Assad's forces as well as Iraq, Syria's arch-foe. But when it came to peacemaking, the United States managed on its own.

One reason was Israel's distrust of Moscow. Another was the conviction the Soviets were interested in promoting the views of radical Arabs.

As a result, when President Jimmy Carter mediated between Egypt and Israel to help produce their 1979 peace treaty, he operated without consulting Moscow.

In the years since, the Soviets have taken a friendlier stand on Israel and put some distance between themselves and "radical" Arab governments.

Secretary of State James Baker, testifying Thursday before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said the Soviets had helped in the international campaign to liberate Kuwait from Iraq and "it is our intention to have the Soviets involved in the Middle East."

"The old policy was wrong, and we changed it," he said.

It is a historic turnabout, but only one of many emerging from the Gulf war. For instance:

Syria, still on the State Department roster of nations that sponsor terrorism, is fighting alongside the United States against Iraq.

President George Bush, having met with Syria's Assad in Geneva in November, telephoned him Wednesday night to talk about the progress of the war. And Baker has made two trips to Damascus to court the Syrian leader.

A Syrian-based group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, is the leading suspect in the bombing of a Pan American jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988 in which 70 people died.

But Syria no longer is being treated as an outcast.

Jordan, on the other hand, has abandoned its ties with the United States to line up with Iraq.

King Hussein, long courted and financed by the United States, delivered a blistering attack Wednesday on the allied war effort. It is directed, he said, "against all Arabs and all Muslims and not against Iraq alone."

Sympathy for the king's ravaged economy and his proximity to Iraq finally gave out. Bush said the Jordanians "made a mistake to align themselves so closely to (Iraq leader) Saddam Hussein against the rest of the world." Late Thursday the Administration said it was reviewing U.S. aid to Jordan, which runs about \$102 million a year.

Iran, on the other hand, drew praise Thursday from Baker even though the United States is still routinely denounced in Tehran as the great satan and diplomatic relations have been suspended since the U.S. embassy was sacked and its occupants taken hostage in 1979.

Baker called Iran's efforts to

mediate the Gulf war "credible," and he said the administration was willing to hold talks with Iranian leaders — provided they renounced terrorism and arranged the release of American hostages held by pro-Iranian terrorists in Lebanon.

The secretary also proposed a new post-war Middle East bank for reconstruction and development and other measures to expand free trade and investment in the region.

With the world spinning so crazily, the administration's offer to help rebuild Iraq hardly seems odd at all — particularly since it's coupled with a not-so-subtle hint to the Iraqi military to depose Saddam.

Like Bush earlier in the week, Baker stopped short of calling for the overthrow of the Iraqi leader. But there was no mistaking that was the U.S. hope when he declared after outlining a generous rehabilitation programme: "we really mean it when we say our quarrel is not with the Iraqi people."

Bush, at a news conference Tuesday, insisted that the United States had not added the overthrow of Saddam to its war objective. And yet, he said: "now, would I weep? Would I mourn if somehow Saddam Hussein did not remain as head of his country? ... There will be no sorrow if he is not there."

Baker, less dramatically perhaps, assured Sen. Richard G. Lugar, R-Ind, that "we are not at the point of talking about enlarging our war aims and goals."

And yet, having proffered a generous U.S. assistance programme for postwar Iraq, Baker said with lawyerly understatement: "there is no suggestion on our part that the reconstruction of Iraq could proceed if the current leadership in Iraq remains in power to the same extent and degree it might otherwise."



Not too late for New Delhi

By P.V. Vivekanand

ONE OF the greatest shocks that jolted not only the Arab World but the Third World at large in the wake of the Gulf war was reports that India was granting refuelling facilities to American military transport planes plying between the U.S. bases in the Philippines and the Gulf.

It is simply not true, many argued. How is it possible that India, the champion of the Non-Aligned Movement and the so-called superpower of the oppressed of the world, could do such a thing? Many others asked.

If a blow comes from a known enemy it is not shocking, since it is expected. But when it comes from a friend then the anger and shock is more bitter, particularly when that friend was supposed to help ward off the blow from an enemy. That is precisely the situation that faced everyone.

Well, it was soon established that the reports were true. But that did not answer anything. Many in the Arab World, or at least those who see the Gulf war as a conflict between the oppressed and oppressor, of imperialists and anti-imperialists, of the rich and poor, of the Western quest for hegemony and domination and the Third World yearning for freedom, dignity and honour, are still baffled and pained.

As the Gulf crisis unfolded, only to mushroom into the explosion of war on Jan. 17, India was seen to have adopted one of the oddest positions. Only a day before the first report of American planes being refuelled at Bombay surfaced in the Indian press, the Arab masses got a morale boost from the vivid scenes of pro-Iraqi demonstrations in the Indian capital.

The message that they got was simple: Here are 850 million or so people who really understand the issues involved in the Gulf conflict and have the guts to stand up and say so. It is only natural, many concluded, from the land of Gandhi and Nehru that a strong message has come to the Western powers that enough is enough and it would not be a party to the elimination of a country which openly defied imperialism and reasserted the long suppressed will of the people in the Arab World to get rid of their colonialist links and put their past masters in their place.

Obviously, what was being overlooked in the bargain was the reality that the leaders at the helm in India today were not necessarily of the same mould which produced Gandhi and Nehru.

There are several explanations to the strange, shocking phenomenon that a country like India, which itself was forcefully

fed the bitter cup of colonialism for centuries, has, albeit indirectly, contributed to the American-led campaign against an Arab country with which it enjoyed very strong relations.

The most credible explanation remains that the three-month-old government of Chandra Shekhar does not know its head from its toe. For Mr. Shekhar and the handful of his party colleagues in the Indian parliament, who were suddenly elevated to the status of the "ruling party" by a fluke, it might perhaps been only obliging a "friendly" United States. Obviously, they did not bother to look any further than their noses, the same noses that would never retain their present shape if something is not done urgently in New Delhi to change the situation and reaffirm India's role as one of the leaders of the oppressed.

No one expected India to send its army to defend the Iraqis. The Iraqis do not need them. But to extend help to the forces that are systematically wrecking a friendly country? NO sir, it washes no water even if the argument is that it was only military transport planes that were being refuelled and no fighter planes landed in Indian territory on their way to hammer Iraq with high-tech weapons.

Some suggest that India was

only living up to its part of the bargain enshrined in a treaty with the United States under which Indian military transport planes could be refuelled in American territory in reciprocation. But, for that to happen, India may have to launch an invasion of one of the Latin American countries (perhaps even North American Canada, may be?).

Some argue that certain fundamentalist religious elements in India are not exactly the best of friends with the Arabs and these friends could have been behind the entire "plot" or "conspiracy." But then, since when any Indian government, minority or majority, can fool around with the country's foreign policy, set by its founding forces several decades ago and which steered the nation to the forefront of Third World leadership?

What is surprising still is the position of today's "kingmaker" in India: Rajiv Gandhi and his Congress (I) Party to whose support Mr. Shekhar owes his existence as prime minister. Having criticised the government for what is perceived as a tilt towards the anti-Iraq coalition, Congress (I) appears to be doing very little in a situation where it could do a lot to put things right.

Yes, damage has been done to the Indian image. But it is not too late to repair.

LETTERS

'The role of the media in a free world'

The following letter was addressed to the foreign journalists in Jordan. A copy made available to the Jordan Times.

The Gulf war has been raging violently for the past two weeks and yet censorship still obstructs and veils the bitter reality of this war. Reports on innocent civilian casualties and suffering are muffled. It is your responsibility as news reporters, simply to unveil the truth. It is the essence of your profession's obligation to be sceptical and not be misled by generals and politicians, particularly so when the stakes are human lives and grave matters like war and peace.

As the first days of the Gulf war indicated, generals have put a rosy cast on fighting. A cast that we, the ordinary people of the world, are becoming more suspicious of. How about you? If you went along with generals and politicians, you would fall victim to misinformation. Today, you have a chance to display integrity and humane attitude and stand up and be counted for.

The American people and Europeans cannot come to our region to witness the suffering of children and listen to the grief of civilians. You can bring to the world attention the ugly reality of this war. Many Americans, Arabs and others have already spoken out in concern for their children. Would you wake up to the bitter harvest only when the ugly scenes of death start flowing to America? Would you wake up only when you see heaps of children and civilian bodies perishing under rubble? It would, unfortunately, be too late then when an irreparable damage has already been done to all. Certainly we do not want another documentary in ten years time showing now "the West failed to meet the East" another time.

As Jordanian mothers, we do believe that news reporters are credible messengers able to check a catastrophe occurring on a larger scale. Attempts to withhold bad news, or put a false shine on it certainly diminish your credibility and ultimately you become pawns for military generals and misguided politicians. We believe that you can serve humanity well by joining the people of peace in fighting all attitudes of war. Your contribution towards stopping war machines via honest reporting and activating world conscience is a mission so many of us in this wretched planet uphold and honour.

Jordanian Mothers
P.O. Box. 8431
Amman, Jordan

Do yourself a favour

I find it very hard to understand why people across Jordan keep analysing and trying to understand why the West act with Arab issues on the basis of double standards.

Arabs must realise that the West has no eternal enemies, the West has no eternal friends, the West does not care about justice towards Arabs, the West does not give two hoots about all Arabs and what Arabs may feel at any given time.

The Arabs have made the West like this because if one wants respect one must earn it through self-respect. The West now respects Saddam many times over Mubarak or Fahd.

Having said that there is one thing that should be kept in mind at all times, the West does have eternal interests and only this is what matters.

So do yourself a favour and stop trying to understand the logic of war.

Wajih Murrad
Amman.

No mercy

To the Editor:

I hope you will be kind enough to publish the following remarks on the status of Jordanians who came back from Kuwait.

Contrary to popular belief the majority of people coming back to Jordan from Kuwait do not have money in abundance and do not own villas and flats in the country. That is because most of them could hardly make ends meet in Kuwait, and were leading very ordinary lives, thus unable to save much.

Faced with no option but to return to their homeland after the Aug. 2 takeover of Kuwait, they had to contend with enormous problems, which are too numerous to mention. However, one most pressing problem is that of finding a house or flat to rent, especially as all had to bring back their furniture with them, and came back unprepared. No one could imagine that fellow countrymen would raise the prices to such astronomical levels, far beyond the reach of most. As if it is not bad enough to be suddenly out of work, and without much money, one has to deal with abnormal prices for renting a small flat that seven months ago could not even fetch half today's asking price. At the same time one sees no hope of a solution to this major problem, and landlords are increasing the rents by the day.

I am one of those people affected by this tragedy, and although I might consider myself in better condition than many who returned from Kuwait, I feel bitterly disappointed by this treatment at a time when we need to help one another. I cannot afford the asking price, most landlords who have shown no mercy, and who continue behaving in a wicked fashion.

Ghassan Harari

U.S. official presses campaign against Washington's policy

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff reporter

IT IS RARE that one comes across people who are willing to risk the security of a well-paid, respected job with the American establishment to take up what is easily described these days as a lost cause — that of trying to reverse the administration course in the Gulf war. Dr. Anthony Lawrence is one of them. He has not only taken up the cause but also laid his job at the Treasury Department on the line to fight for what he believes in: That the U.S. is waging a war in a place where it has no place to be and using force to acquire economic and political gain.

"I sent my two sons to the U.S. military to serve and defend the country, not to be turned into pawns in a war which is not ours," says Dr. Lawrence, who spent over a month in Iraq during the run-up to and after the break-out of the war between the American-led allied forces and Iraq.

Dr. Lawrence has no doubt whatsoever that the prime objectives of the U.S. administration are not only to do away with an Arab country which posed a serious challenge to American objectives and economic interests in the oil-rich Middle East but

also to assume de facto control of the region's oil resources in a manner which will boost Washington's hand in dealing with a new united Europe and Japan.

"The war is irrational, unnecessary and detrimental to the long-term interests of the United States in the Middle East," he said.

The 44-year-old expert in international energy economy says his opposition to the Bush administration's policy is two-pronged: On the one hand, he rejects the use of military means to serve economic and political objectives and on the other he questions why "young Americans should sacrifice their lives for a cause which is not American."

Dr. Lawrence believes that the Gulf crisis should have been left to the Arab World to resolve. "Essentially, it was an Arab problem and remains to be one, and the U.S. had not business to enter the conflict," he said.

How does he view the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and Baghdad's proclamation of the emirate as the 19th province of Iraq?

"Let me put it this way," he said. "Kuwait was a creation of the British colonial power in 1989 in a bid to block the advance of Kaiser and stop Germany from extending the (planned) Berlin-

Baghdad railroad to the Gulf. It would have been much better if the colonial power returned the area to Iraq in 1961."

Dr. Lawrence highlighted that Iraq is one of the few Arab states, perhaps the only one in the Gulf, to have utilised its resources for national economic growth. "Iraq's oil revenues were channelled into within the country while the income of other oil-producing countries in the region was transferred to Western markets where it created economic disorder through speculation and misguided investments," he said.

The U.S. and its allies have completely ignored the fact that they now destroying the economic infrastructure of a country, which has a proven record of using its resources for its own good," he said.

Dr. Lawrence's two adopted sons — one black and other white — are part of the 500,000-strong American contingent arrayed against Iraq. The first, PFC Charles R. Lawrence, 23, is already somewhere in the war theatre and other, Marine Lance Corporal Mark Lawrence, 22, is awaiting moving orders for his amphibious assault force based in Japan.

"I do not think they would turn conscientious objectors, if only because it is meaningless to do so

on the warfront," Dr. Lawrence said. "At least five American soldiers who objected to being redeployed in the Gulf were taken to the warfront in mezzos," he said.

But Dr. Lawrence plans to press his campaign to mobilise American public opinion against the war through setting up a peace camp near the White House or Capitol Hill. He expects the camp to have around 1,000 people at any given time until the administration reverses its "policy of war" in the Gulf.

"We have very good indications from various parts of the United States that the idea of a peace camp has very good support," he said. "I'll get to work as soon as I get home."

One of Dr. Lawrence's strategy is an appeal to parents of all American soldiers in the Gulf to call on the administration to demand the withdrawal of U.S. forces in the Gulf.

But a fight for an end to American involvement in the Gulf war is not the only struggle that awaits Dr. Lawrence. In theory, he is on leave without pay from the Treasury Department and may find himself deprived of a job when he returns home.

"I am going to give them a fight," he said. "If they fire me, then I am going to take the



Dr. Anthony Lawrence

administration to court on two counts: First they are denying me my freedom of expression as granted to every American citizen and persecuting me for exercising this freedom," he said. "Second, they are also denying me the freedom of religious expression. I am a Methodist and my church, a member of the National Council of Churches of the U.S., has called for the unconditional withdrawal of American forces from the Gulf. I am only adhering to the position of my church since I am calling exactly for what my church is calling for."

"Thus, if they dismiss me then they will be punishing me for following the church; my country's constitution gives me the right to express the views of my church and this is a violation of my constitutional right."

Gulf war strikes blow at NATO at critical point in its history

By Nicholas Doughty
Renter

BRUSSELS — The Gulf war has sown discontent and division within NATO at a time when the Western alliance most needs unity to preserve its future in the post-cold war era.

Analysts and diplomats say creating an effective European defence identity within the alliance, in a more equal partnership with the United States, had been one of the chief aims in far-reaching NATO reforms planned for this year.

But controversy and recriminations over the Gulf war role of some European allies, especially Germany, have seriously damaged that ambition and strained the trans-Atlantic relations at the heart of NATO.

Despite public protestations that the rows are now over and everyone is reconciled for the sake of solidarity in wartime, NATO officials say the damage has already been done.

"There's a lot of cynicism here, a lot of bitterness about how little some of the Europeans have done, how half-hearted they have been," said one NATO diplomat from a European country.

"But a lot of Europeans also resent the American attitude. I don't think we yet realise the political bill that NATO will have to pay as a result of the Gulf war."

Of NATO's 16 members, only Britain, France and Italy have ground or air forces fighting in the Gulf in support of the United States, which has asked its allies repeatedly for more transport, troops and cash.

Simon Linn, deputy secretary-general of the North Atlantic Assembly which groups parliamentarians from NATO members, said plans for Europe to take

greater defence responsibilities had been unrealistic.

"The Gulf has made people see how much of what we really said was the rhetoric of hope, rather than solid expectation," he said. Countries like Germany and Belgium, criticised for their level of support in Gulf operations, have tried recently to dispel impressions of half-heartedness by promising more money or equipment to allies involved in the conflict.

But there are many in NATO who feel this has come too late. "The way these countries behaved initially will not be forgotten, particularly if the Gulf war brings large casualties and lasts a long time," said another senior NATO diplomat.

Francis Heisbourg, director of the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, said recently there was a danger that Atlantic and European solidarity "may be buried in the sands of Arabia."

The 16-nation NATO alliance is not directly involved in the Gulf war, since the region is outside its theatre of operations.

But even NATO Secretary-General Manfred Woerner is clearly worried by the arguments about war efforts.

"The Gulf crisis has highlighted how modest the European contribution has been... how great the difference of view," he said in a speech last month.

A former West German defence minister, Woerner was so upset by Germany's attitude that he has travelled to Bonn several times recently for talks, including a private meeting with Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, NATO sources said.

What particularly upset Woerner and many others, the sources added, was that German leaders

appeared initially reluctant to guarantee the security of Turkey, the only alliance member bordering on Iraq.

Collective security is the bedrock of NATO policy and that perceived reluctance led Turkish President Turgut Ozal to criticise Germany as an unreliable ally.

It was a bitter irony for NATO, since Germany had been the main focus of the alliance's defence efforts during more than four decades of cold war.

These problems have simply added to NATO's burden as it tries to prove it still has a major political role to play on the world stage.

Woerner has promised that A Fresh strategy for a "new look" NATO will be ready by the summer.

Part of this has been an attempt to create a stronger European defence identity, because U.S. troops numbers on the continent will fall sharply now the cold war is over.

The United States, which complained repeatedly about "burden-sharing" and the European defence contribution during the years of East-West confrontation, wants this plan to succeed — provided Washington can keep a leading role in NATO.

But many alliance diplomats now believe that U.S. public opinion and Congress will increase pressure for bigger military withdrawals from Europe than originally foreseen, given the problems with European support in the Gulf.

A NATO diplomat said: "since the trans-Atlantic relationship is the one thing that makes NATO unique, any significant weakening of the U.S. commitment to Europe could be very bad news for us."

Jordan

(Continued from page 1)

Jordan, which totals a mere \$55 million for 1991.

The U.S. has not provided extra aid to Jordan to cover the country's losses due to the cut in trade links with Iraq and Kuwait brought by the U.N.-imposed embargo on Iraq. U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said in a congressional testimony this week that the U.S. intended to keep lines of communications with Jordan open.

In his statements Friday, Mr. Fitzwater accused Jordan of siding a bid by Baghdad to influence Arab opinion against the United States.

"It is clear (Jordan) has taken up their cause," he told reporters.

Mr. Fitzwater's remarks contrasted sharply with the initial restrained reaction of President Bush.

Mr. Fitzwater went out of his way to discourage speculation that relations between Washington and Amman would be irreparably damaged by the current estrangement.

But the tone of his comments suggested that the United States regarded Jordan as Iraq's ally despite its professed neutrality.

He said Iraq was using "any pretext and any means to try to split" the international alliance arrayed against it and "alienate the Arab World against the United States."

Jordan "certainly was playing a role in that effort," Mr. Fitzwater said.

Jordanians reacted angrily to Washington's announcement that it was reviewing aid to the Kingdom. One deputy said it brought relations towards "freezing point."

"I think we've been subjected to strangulation," said deputy Abdul Karim Kabarti, a former cabinet minister. "If relations are said to be chilling then it's fair to say they are heading towards the freezing point," he told Reuters.

Finance Minister Basil Jaradneh said it was unclear whether Washington was considering suspending, cutting or cancelling aid outright but called the review unjustified.

The statement that was said by His Majesty indicated that Jordan is not a part of the conflict, which is what we've said all along," he told Reuters.

Some 7,000 people, waving pro-

Washington

(Continued from page 1)

Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said the Congress has the right to be "frustrated" with the speech because, he said, "King Hussein should know better."

He suggested that rather than trying to calm pro-Iraq and anti-U.S. feelings in Jordan, the King was "trying to fuel them." Mr. Torricelli contended the position articulated in Wednesday's speech would "ill-serve" Jordan and its leadership.

Some Washington academics also show understanding for the public position adopted by Jordan. Georgetown University Professor Michael Hudson said the problem, from the point of view of inhabitants of the area, occurred when U.S. and other European troops came to the region. "The extent of the war has shocked everyone," Mr. Hudson said. "It is important to realise that (King Hussein) did criticise the invasion," he added.

Another professor of Middle East and Arab affairs, Peter Gubser, said King Hussein was speaking as an Arab king to an Arab nation, and "feels strongly for a brother Arab state."

He said the political reforms and democratic experiment witnessed in Jordan had not been given proper credit. "We (in

Syrian oil

(Continued from page 1)

According to war refugees, the aerial bombardment is continuing and has damaged several stretches on the highway, but the road is still negotiable to a large extent.

Meanwhile, Jordan is going ahead with plans to purchase a ship to facilitate its imports of oil. The \$7.5 million, 100,000-tonne ship is expected to dock at Aqaba by the end of the month.

"Since it will be our own ship, we will not have to pay the high war-risk insurance that is being levied on vessels calling at Aqaba," said one of the officials. "It could also serve as a storage vessel if the need arises," he noted.

But the main problem that confronts Jordan is how to pay in cash for the oil purchases without drawing from its foreign exchange reserves. Any heavy drawing from the estimated \$600 million reserves would have chain reactions on the economy in terms of the value of the dinar, economists noted.

Furthermore, the Kingdom also needs hard currency in foreign exchange to pay for its imports of foodstuffs as well as material for essential industries. A part of the requirement has been taken care of with grants and loans from Germany and Japan as well as other countries. In addition, Jordan also needs to service its foreign debts and concurrent with outstanding payments due in 1990 before it can secure World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) green signal to resume negotiations on rescheduling foreign debt repayments due in 1991 and 1992.

'Infiltrators'

(Continued from page 1)

around 7 a.m. (0500 GMT) near Beer Meonah, about three kilometres from the demarcation line border and 140 kilometres south of Jerusalem on the main highway to the Red Sea through the desert.

Hawkish new minister without portfolio, Rehavam Zeevi, "warned" Jordan not to attempt to block any Israeli strike against Iraq.

Jordan has vowed to block any Israeli attempt to cross its airspace to retaliate for Iraqi missiles fired at the Jewish state since the start of the Gulf war Jan. 17.

"I believe Jordanians would understand that if Israel decided to exercise its right (to retaliate) they should sit by quietly," Zeevi said.

"If they don't sit quietly we will have to take care of them and then they will taste the flavour of the armed forces," said Zeevi, who wants the occupied territories cleared of all Palestinians.

U.N.

(Continued from page 1)

his report was broadcast on Jan. 23.

Military briefers, responding to Amet's report, insisted the plant produced biological weapons, with Gen. Powell saying, "It was a biological weapons facility, of this we are sure."

Mr. Perez de Cuellar has denied complaining about the United States during last-ditch peace talks with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

In an interview published Friday in the French daily Le Monde, Mr. Perez de Cuellar said he told President Saddam in Baghdad last month he disagreed with a U.S. decision to ban Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz's plane from landing in New York.

"I did not complain about the role of the United States in the

Bridge

(Continued from page 1)

saying that another 102 civilians were injured when the bombers destroyed the Al Nasir bridge on Monday.

The report quoted Dr. Farooq as saying on Thursday that four bombs hit the 548-metre bridge.

It quoted Dr. Farooq as saying he was standing with his son less than 1 kilometre from the bridge when "suddenly, I saw it hit by multiple explosions."

Dr. Farooq said at least 400 people were on the bridge at the time and that he believed the casualty toll would rise because many bodies were carried away by the River Euphrates.

Another man, former soldier Mohammed Khadun, was quoted as saying the bridge was abnormally crowded because a footbridge previously used by pedestrians was destroyed in an earlier raid.

Iraq said meanwhile it shot down three allied planes in 192 allied air raids on its territory, including residential areas, and vowed to "crush the heads of the aggressors."

Iraq's military spokesman said Iraq air defences shot down one plane during 138 allied air raids Thursday night.

"Attacks on residential targets in our country and other sectors... will not pass without punishment," Baghdad Radio quoted the spokesman as saying.

The latest communique brought to 305 the number of planes or missiles Iraq says it has shot down since the

Post-war

(Continued from page 1)

programmes against illegal drug traffic and joint strategies for fighting "terrorism," Bild said.

"For that, I would be willing to return parts of the (occupied territories)," Bild quoted Mr. Peres as saying.

When asked if Israel would be willing to hold talks with the PLO, Mr. Peres reportedly replied: "No, with the representatives of the residents of the (territories). We will not talk with anyone that shoots at us."

However, Mr. Peres said he expects the PLO will not be the same after the Gulf war ends, Bild said.

"After this war the PLO will be different. I hope that the PLO does not hinder a peace dialogue," the newspaper quoted Mr. Peres as saying. It did not elaborate.

Mr. Peres was also quoted as saying that Israel expects up to 1 million resettlers in the country in coming years.

"Among them are many engineers and doctors. Israel could, for example, become a medical centre for this region," Bild quoted Mr. Peres as saying.

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy will meet with Secretary Baker in Washington this month to discuss ways of starting Arab-Israeli peace talks once the Gulf war is over, an Israeli official said Friday.

Cheney

(Continued from page 1)

of the situation which clearly would continue the air campaign and add to that other capabilities."

While meeting over the weekend with top U.S. military commanders and Saudi officials, Mr. Cheney and Gen. Powell will address timing of use of ground force, the Defence Secretary said.

Abdul Rahman, Iraq's vice-consul, told a news conference the 25 Iraqis employed at the consulate will return to Baghdad via Amman, on the first available commercial flight. The consul-general left earlier in the week.

In other developments: — Britain said that the allies had knocked out 15 to 20 per cent of Iraq's fighting capability.

Defence Secretary Tom King also made clear that the allies would wait until about half of Iraq's forces had been knocked out before launching a ground offensive.

Mr. King said the allies had carried out a broad assessment of the damage done to Iraq's tanks, artillery and armoured personnel carriers. "That overall has been reduced by somewhere between 15 and 20 per cent," he told a news conference.

The commander of U.S. forces in the Gulf war said he thinks it is still too early to tell whether a ground war

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McEnroe wins, Gomez bows out of San Francisco tournament

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — John McEnroe is satisfied with his latest win in the Volvo-San Francisco Tennis Tournament, even if he did serve 12 double faults.

"That's more than I'd like," McEnroe said after Thursday night's win over Australian Mark Kratzman. "But then I've been struggling with my game for several years."

The fourth-seeded McEnroe advanced to the quarterfinals after coming from behind in a second-set tiebreaker to squeeze by Kratzman 6-4, 7-6. The 24-year-old Kratzman ranks 83rd in the world. The 31-year-old McEnroe is 15th.

David Pate also gained the

quarterfinals by upsetting second-seeded Andre GomeZ of Ecuador 1-6, 6-1, 6-2. GomeZ, ranked sixth in the world, Pate, the recent Australian Open doubles champion with Scott Davis, ranks 97th.

McEnroe won the first set when Kratzman made two double-faults and a costly forehand error when serving at 4-5.

Then after trading breaks early in the second set, Kratzman got a 4-2 lead in the tiebreaker. Again Kratzman was plagued by net and backcourt errors and McEnroe jumped to double match point at 6-4. At 6-5, McEnroe served, then hit a shoe-top level backhand volley winner for the match.

Kratzman blamed lack of play for his lapses.

"He put a lot of pressure on me in the tiebreaker," Kratzman said. "I probably missed the medium volleys I did because I haven't played a lot recently. But I was happy with my form."

"I need to work on my concentration," McEnroe said. "That was one thing that used to separate me from the rest of the players."

Pate said his victory was his best win since last summer. "I feel lucky to have won it," Pate said. "The way he started off I could have been off the court in 35 minutes. But he played a little loose (in the second set) and let me back in. If you serve well, you

can turn things around on this court."

A pair of Australian Davis Cuppers, sixth-seeded Darren Cahill and no. 7 Wally Masur, also gained the quarterfinals.

Cahill came from behind to edge 95th-ranked Guillaume Raoux of France 5-7, 6-4, 6-3. Masur had an easier time with the smoothing-stroking Ramesh Krishnan of India, winning 6-3, 6-3.

"I'm not that disappointed," the 30-year-old Gomez said. "I played solid but he came up with some good shots. I'm a little bit slow. I need to play a few more matches, especially indoors. Maybe I got a little tired."

IOC issues invitations for '92 Winter Olympics

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AP) — With one eye on the war in the Gulf and the other on the snowy skies overhead, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Friday invited athletes from 165 nations to come to the French Alps in one year for the 1992 winter games.

The IOC issued invitations to the Winter Olympics, to be based in Albertville, France, and held throughout the mountains and valleys of Savoy region.

The winter games are scheduled to start on Feb. 8, 1992. IOC President Samaranch said the Gulf war had cast a shadow over the world, but that it was important for sports to continue as part of the quest for peace.

"There is a fight for peace. The Olympic Movement has to play its role in that fight," he said. Samaranch signed the invitations to National Olympic Committees of the IOC's 165 member countries. They were then placed in three bright orange-and-blue mail sacks and taken away by officials of the Swiss and United States postal services.

The U.S. Postal Service, represented at the ceremony by Deputy Director Richard Porras, is an official sponsor of the Olympics as part of the IOC's top program.

Samaranch praised the work of COJO, the Albertville Organising Committee, and particularly that of co-presidents Jean-Claude Killy and Michel Barnier, who flanked him on the dais at the IOC's headquarters.

Killy and Barnier, in turn, thanked the members of the organising committee for their hard

work and said that the countdown for the Albertville games was right on schedule.

"Twelve months away, we think we have all things under control, but we still have a lot of work to do," said Killy, the former Olympic ski champion. "We are where we want to be."

Friday's ceremony was delayed about 40 minutes while Killy and Barnier battled through a heavy overnight snow that doubled their journey time from Chambery, France, to Lausanne. They were not complaining.

"We love the snow," Killy said. "We particularly do, given the lack of snow we had the last three years. Business is better and the mood is upbeat."

National Olympic committees have until June 8 to respond to the invitations. At the last winter games, in 1988, 57 sent athletes.

"The theatre for the games is in place," Killy said at a press conference.

A cost overrun of 1.6 billion francs (\$320 million) has been the organising committee's biggest headache.

There were also unexpected safety concerns over the bobbed and luge course and the ski jump platforms. Pre-Olympic test competition on those sites had to be postponed.

But Barnier, a politician who is president of the regional general council, said the problems have been ironed out.

"We have nearly finished construction," he said. "Between now and March it will be completely finished, so we have the opportunity to test the equipment as well as the organisation."

Holyfield-Foreman bout may be postponed to April 26

ATLANTA (AP) — Donald Trump's money woes may force the heavyweight championship fight between George Foreman and Evander Holyfield — scheduled for April 19 in Atlantic City — to be shifted to Las Vegas a week later, one of the promoters said.

Co-promoter Bob Arum of Top Rank Inc. made the comment following a news conference attended by both fighters and the other promoter, Don Duva of Main Events. He said it appears the fight will be held on April 26

at Caesar's Palace.

The promoters were guaranteed \$11 million by Trump to hold the fight at his Trump Plaza in Atlantic City, but Arum said Trump told him Monday he would attempt to invoke a "war clause" in the contract and renegotiate the fee to a reported \$5.6 million.

Arum said Trump's proposed action came about because the entrepreneur apparently can't make a \$2.5-million payment to the promoters that is due Saturday.

Fernandez wins largest prize in women's tennis

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Mary Joe Fernandez wasn't the first choice and she at first didn't want to come. But in the end, she was the winner of the largest prize ever in women's tennis.

"I was lucky to get in, and I just decided to come," said Fernandez, a last-minute replacement in the Big Bear Challenge for the injured Monica Seles.

"I've been on the road for a month and I debated whether to come."

"It turned out great and I was fortunate to do so well."

When the two-day, four-player tennis exhibition was over, the 19-year-old Fernandez had won a record \$268,000, exceeding the \$250,000 in the Virginia Slims Championships.

Fernandez wasn't scheduled to be here, but replaced Seles last Sunday when the Australian Open champion aggravated a shoulder injury in Tokyo. Thursday night, she defeated 14-year-old Jennifer Capriati 6-0, 6-2 in the championship match.

Earlier Thursday, Fernandez lost to Capriati 6-4 in the round-

robin portion of the event. But she used the defeat to her advantage in the title match.

Capriati set the tempo in the early match with her serve, keeping Fernandez pinned back on the baseline and back on her heels.

"I think I was a little bit aggressive. I can't let her dictate the match," Fernandez said before the championship.

So she changed her approach to Capriati's serve.

"I was a little asleep in the first match," Fernandez said. "I got off to a really slow start and she served big."

"The second time around, I stepped a little further back (when receiving serve) and I gave myself more time to return her serve."

The results were immediate as Fernandez broke Capriati on her first six service games.

"She played extremely well and didn't miss anything," said Capriati. "I was flat. I wasn't doing anything. And I couldn't get going."

The exhibition was based on golf's skins game, with money changing hands for each point, ace, game and set won or lost.

Portugal anxious for win against Malta

VALLETTA, Malta (R) — Portugal, unnerved by losing to Greece, are avoiding rash predictions before their European Championship qualifying soccer match against Malta Saturday.

After throwing away a 2-1 lead in Athens and the chance to go top of group six last month, Portugal manager Artur Jorge's only aim is to win.

"The objective in the two games with Malta is four points. We are not going to repeat the defensive mistakes we made in the game against Greece," he said.

Victory in Greece would have made Portugal favorites to qualify for next year's finals in Sweden after beating current champions the Netherlands in Lisbon.

Although Jorge says his main concern is victory, with only one side qualifying from the group Portugal need to score plenty of goals as the Dutch beat Malta 8-0 in Valletta in December.

But Portugal have never done well against the Maltese. In their last four encounters since 1985, Portugal had three narrow victories and were held to a 2-2 draw in Madeira in 1987.

Snow, freezing temperatures hit U.K. sports fixtures

LONDON (R) — Heavy snow and sub-zero temperatures throughout Britain have wrecked the weekend's sporting programme, with most soccer matches and race meetings called off as the country suffers its worst winter for four years.

As many soccer clubs postponed their weekend Saturday fixtures Friday, the Football League feared its worst Saturday since Jan. 17, 1987, when 37 out of 46 fixtures were lost to the weather.

Friday's lowest recorded temperature was minus 11 Centigrade in Bournemouth on the south coast, and few places were expected to rise above freezing during the day.

Four of the eight English first division fixtures and 11 of the 12 second division were postponed Friday morning.

All horse racing meetings were

called off for a second successive day Friday and four of Saturday's five meetings were abandoned.

Even the British masters snooker tournament failed to escape the weather. Jimmy White was just four minutes away from disqualification Thursday night after thick snow held up him up in London traffic for three and a half hours.

Arsenal manager George Graham, whose side's match against Nottingham Forest was called off despite undersoil heating at their Highbury Ground, called for an annual two-month break in the English League programme.

"I've always been an advocate of a winter break in January and February," said the league leaders' manager.

"You only have to look at the records over the years to see that's the real danger time for the weather."

"It would also do the players good and help keep them nice and fresh. British soccer is the most physically demanding in the world and the Europeans can't believe our season runs non-stop for nine months."

Undersoil heating at Anfield is likely to allow the Merseyside derby between Liverpool and Everton to go ahead, but Manchester City's home game against Chelsea could be the only other first division survivor.

Second-placed Liverpool, who also play Everton in the F.A. Cup next week, have Scottish international defender Gary Gillespie fit again.

But midfielder Steve McMahon, who pulled out of England's midweek game after suffering a groin strain in last Sunday's draw against Manchester United, will undergo a fitness test Friday.

United expect Sunday's League Cup semifinal first leg against Leeds to go ahead at Old Trafford, with manager Alex Ferguson hoping the presence of live television for the second consecu-

tive week does not prevent another large crowd.

"I am looking to our fans to give us the boost we need." United are unbeaten in 20 consecutive cup ties — 12 in the F.A. Cup, four in the League Cup and four in European Cup Winners' Cup — since Tottenham beat them in the third round of the League Cup in 1989.

"Knowing we had a Wembley appearance booked would give us the composure to handle everything else this season and perhaps win something else," said Ferguson.

Midfielder Paul Ince will return to the United side after missing the last five games with a groin strain. Defender Mike Phelan is still nursing bruised ribs but is expected to get the all-clear.

Leeds have three strikers under treatment. Carl Shutt, who missed last Saturday's game against Tottenham with a hamstring strain, is given a good chance of being fit, but there is more concern over Lee Chapman and John Pearson.

New Bordeaux president gets time to save club

BORDEAUX, France (R) — New Bordeaux President Jean-Pierre Derose was given two weeks grace at a court hearing Friday to find the cash to save the heavily indebted club from going into receivership.

Derose, who took over at Bordeaux Thursday after millionaire optician Alain Afflelou failed to find enough backers to keep the club afloat, said he was delighted by the decision.

"I am very happy because I

needed seven or eight days to bring in the necessary money," he said. "We are in a position to say today that the club is saved."

The court, in a first hearing on whether the club, which has debts of around 300 million francs (\$60 million), should go into receivership, gave Derose until Feb. 21 to find 200 million francs (\$40 million).

Bordeaux faced automatic relegation to the second division if it went into receivership.

Canadian records set by admitted drug users voided

OTTAWA (AP) — Track and field records set by admitted users have been voided by Athletics Canada.

The sports' governing body in Canada confirmed a total of 13 records have been stricken from the books after the seven athletes who set up them acknowledged use of performance-enhancing drugs.

Athletics Canada identified the seven athletes as sprinters Ben Johnson, Angella Issajenko, Desai Williams and Tonyk Sharpe along with hurdler Mark McKoy, shot putter Bishop Dolegiewiez and discus thrower Rob Gray.

All appeared before last year's federal-appointed Dublin Inquiry into use of anabolic steroids in amateur sport.

Horoscope not received

THE BETTER HALF. By Harris



JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

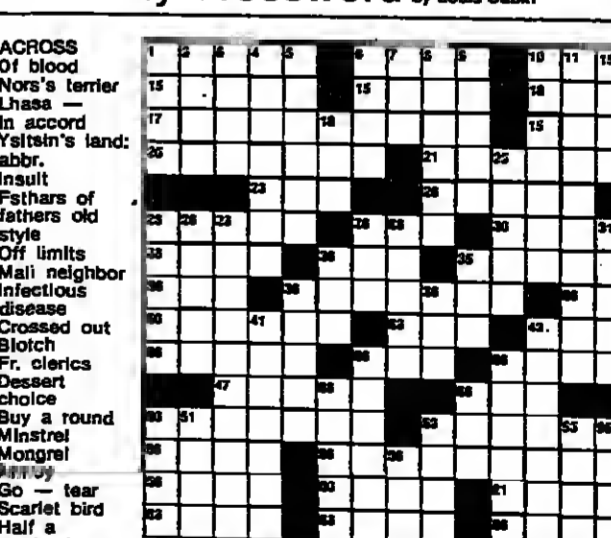
Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



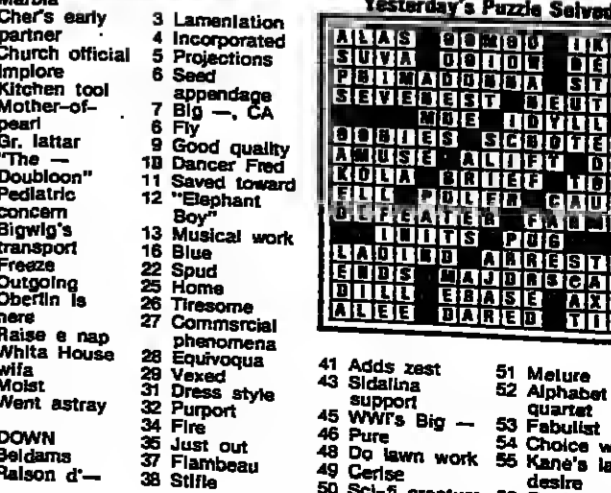
Answer: EVERY HE

Yesterday's Jumbles: ACUTE BROOK UPTOWN SHAKEN
Answer: How the ballplayer felt on an off day—OUT OF "WHACK"

THE Daily Crossword by Louis Sakn



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OWAN SHARIF & TAMAR HIRSH
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ON A WING AND A PRAYER

Both vulnerable. South deals.
NORTH
♠ Q J 3 2
♥ Q 10 7 4 2
♦ Q 10
♣ 9 8
WEST
♠ 9 7
♥ K 6 5
♦ K 7 5 3 2
♣ Q J 10 2
EAST
♠ K 10 8 4
♥ A 9
♦ A 4
♣ K 7 6 5 3
SOUTH
♠ A 6 5
♥ J 8 5 3
♦ A K J 6
♣ A 4

The bidding:
South West North East
1 NT Pass 2 ♠ Pass
2 ♥ Pass 3 ♥ Pass
4 ♥ Pass Pass Pass
Opening lead: Queen of ♠

Don't give up the ship without a fight. No matter how bleak prospects are, look for a bright spot.

North's raise of the Stayman response was invitational. With all his points in primes and a ruffing value in clubs, South's bad easily merit continuing on to game.

West's queen of clubs opening lead hit declarer's weak spot. With two sure losers in trumps, declarer

had to hold his black-suit losers to one if he was going to get home. So declarer won the first trick in hand with the ace and tried to take a club discard on the third round of diamonds. Unfortunately, East ruffed with the nine, cashed the ace of hearts and exited with a club, leaving declarer in a sore predicament.

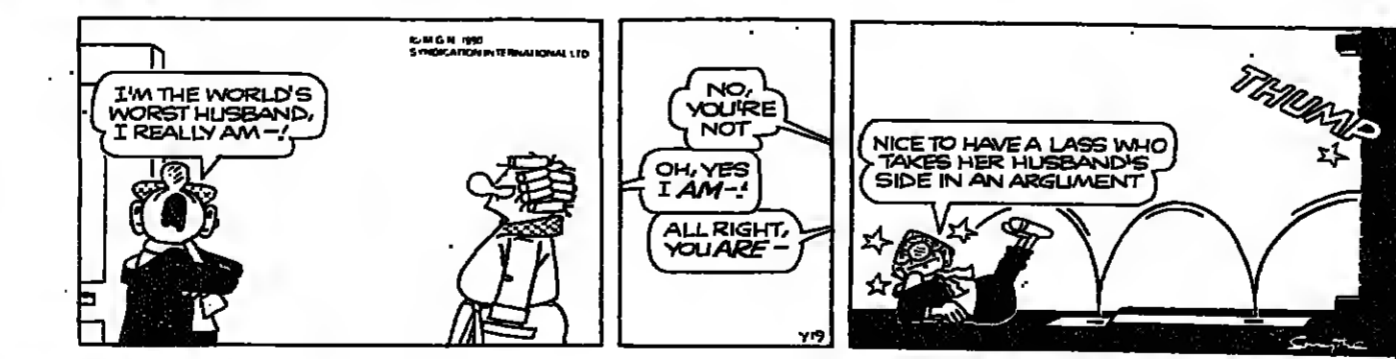
The defenders already had two tricks in the bag and the king of trumps was a sure loser. That meant declarer was not only going to need a winning spade finesse, but since he had at least three spades in each hand, he would have to engineer an endplay as well.

Timing was important. South ruffed the club in dummy and ran the queen of spades, which held.

Declarer came to band with the ace of spades and then made the key play of cashing his remaining high diamond. Next, declarer threw West on lead with the master trump.

The cards lay as declarer had hoped—West had started with a doubleton spade. That defender was forced to return a minor suit, which declarer ruffed in dummy while discarding the remaining spade loser from hand. Making four-odd.

Andy Capp



Peanuts



Dealers dismiss dollar as safe haven currency

TOKYO (R) — The dollar's appeal as a safe haven currency has vanished in Asian foreign exchange markets and some analysts now wonder if its safety value had been over-rated all along.

Anticipation of a war in the Gulf was often given as a reason for buying dollars in recent months but the start of hostilities cut interest flat.

Foreign exchange traders say Asian markets have followed a textbook formula — buy on the rumour, sell on the fact.

Some add that only the use of nuclear weapons in the Gulf could revive the dollar's safe haven appeal, but that even that might be short-lived.

"The dollar was bought on anticipation of a war. The continuation of a war is not considered a state of emergency in the currency market," said Hiroshi Masuda, foreign exchange deputy general manager at Daiwa Securities in Tokyo.

"Five minutes after news was out that the Gulf war had started, the dollar collapsed," said Stanley Wong, treasurer at Standard Chartered Bank in Hong Kong. A safe haven is usually considered to be the currency of a country whose economy can withstand times of turmoil.

The dollar dropped a thumping

four yen and four pence on Jan. 17, the day when the war started, and has been edging down since.

"The answer is, what Gulf war?" said Noel Keil, foreign exchange manager at Westpac Banking Corp in Singapore. "The dollar's (safe-haven status) certainly doesn't exist now."

Economic fundamentals again rule Asian markets with dealers trading on interest rate differentials and high-yield currencies. Dealers no longer react as they once did to every rumour about the Gulf.

Since the Gulf crisis began when Iraq invaded Kuwait in August, safe haven has been used so often as an excuse for buying that its original sense of a refuge for investment has waned, dealers said.

"It's very unlikely that a currency that has been falling for many months will have any safe status," David Morrison, chief international economist for Goldman Sachs, told a Tokyo foreign exchange conference in Tokyo.

The Gulf war and the preceding crisis may well have been the first test of whether the safe haven theory of dollar buying really holds. It is the world's biggest conflict since 1973, when the floating system replaced fixed rates for major currencies.

The dollar hit its 1990 peak, at

160.35 yen, in Tokyo on April 2, 1990, well before the Gulf crisis was thought of. It was the dollar's highest level here since December 1986.

Since then, despite the Gulf, its track has been mainly downward except for upward spikes on especially worrisome news. On Aug. 2, the dollar ended here less than two yen higher at 148.90 yen.

The dollar advanced 2-1/2 yen to close at 132.75 yen here on Nov. 30 after the United Nations issued an ultimatum authorising the use of force against Iraq.

From then on to the Jan. 15 U.N. deadline for Iraq to quit Kuwait, it stayed in a range of 132-137 yen.

Dealers say that safe haven buying could again come into play if there were significant setbacks to the U.S.-led allied forces in the Gulf.

"The market would like to see a correction and could use this as an excuse," said a dealer at an Asian bank in Singapore.

Dealers said no other currencies were likely to replace the dollar immediately as the target of safe-haven buying.

"Some investors may be shifting from the dollar to the mark for higher yields, but the market for mark-denominated financial instruments is not as large as the one dollar instruments," said a Tokyo-based investment advisor.

U.S. increases aid to Ankara

ANKARA (R) — The United States will give Turkey an extra \$82 million in military aid this year, the U.S. embassy said Friday.

Turkey, the only NATO country bordering Iraq, has let U.S. planes launch bombing raids from its territory.

The embassy said Washington had agreed to provide a military aid package worth \$82 million in addition to grants of \$553.4 million announced earlier this month.

The new package includes \$50 million in security assistance credits and \$32 million worth of equipment and supplies to be sent to Turkey immediately from U.S. military stocks.

Turkey is the third biggest recipient of U.S. security aid after Israel and Egypt. In 1990 it received \$515 million, 83 per cent in grants and the rest in loans.

Turkish President Turgut Ozal has firmly supported U.S. Gulf policy since Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

In return Washington has raised its Turkish textile import quota by half, converted loan elements in the military aid programme to grants, supplied Patriot anti-missile missiles and pressed other donor nations to give more to Ankara.

"Next year will see the United States trying to increase the levels

of assistance further," one Western diplomat said.

The European Community (EC) explained Friday how it would disburse its 175 million ECU (\$245 million) loan to Turkey, one of three "frontline states" hit by the Gulf crisis.

An EC statement said the 10-year, interest-free loan was tied to the import of non-military capital equipment, spare parts and other industrial materials from the EC.

It would be disbursed in two tranches, one of 140 million ECUs (\$196 million) by mid-March and the rest by mid-May. In addition, EC members have committed 140 million ECUs (\$196 million) in bilateral support to Turkey, of which more than 60 million ECUs (\$84 million) has been disbursed.

Turkish officials have given estimates of Gulf crisis losses in 1990 varying from \$1.5 to \$5 billion. Treasury officials said early last month that Ankara had received \$2.5 billion in Gulf aid so far, most of it in grant form.

Cash-flush Egypt moves to rescue, organise banks

CAIRO (R) — Egypt, flush with cash from its Gulf war allies, is bailing out its troubled state-owned banks and has told private-sector banks to put their house in order, bankers and economists have said.

Economists said the central bank in the last few weeks had approved injecting new capital and other assets into the four main public banks and for the first time instituted a capital-to-assets ratio for the country's 50 private banks.

One Egyptian economist estimated it would take \$2 to \$2.5 billion to put the four state-owned banks on a firm footing. Other economists said the current bail-out was well under \$1 billion.

Western diplomats said Egypt was apparently financing the capital infusion with cash grants it had received from Gulf Arab countries as a reward for support against Iraq.

Egypt has sent around 35,000 troops to join the multinational force fighting Iraq.

The reforms are part of far-reaching financial and currency measures prescribed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and adopted in the last month.

Cairo has been negotiating with the IMF for about three years on an accord that would clear the way for further grants, loans and debt relief from its main Western creditors.

Prime Minister Ataf Sedki told reporters Tuesday he expected the agreement to be signed next month.

Some of Egypt's four public banks — Banque du Caire, Banque Misr, the National Bank of Egypt and the Bank of Alexandria — had loans on their books they had not serviced for decades, economists said.

The banks, nationalised in the early 1960s, had also used dollar-denominated deposits to finance local currency loans and were now suffering from a severe shortage of foreign exchange, they

said.

Central bank and public bank officials were not available for comment.

In a circular to private-sector banks this week, the central bank set the country's first mandatory capital-to-assets ratio.

It said capital, reserves and provisions for possible loan losses must equal at least eight per cent of total bank assets.

The circular set a timetable from two to four years for banks to sort out their positions.

Economists and bankers said many of the private banks were seriously undercapitalised.

"It will mean that a lot of banks will have to either increase their capital or merge," said an Egyptian banker.

In the last month Egypt had also allowed banks and licensed money changers to buy and sell the pound unhindered and abolished its cumbersome system of fixed interest rates on bank loans and deposits.

Hong Kong contributes \$30 million towards Gulf war

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong is to donate \$30 million to Britain for use in the Gulf war.

The finance committee of the British colony's legislature voted Friday to give Britain 230 million Hong Kong dollars (\$30 million) for medical and humanitarian purposes.

The proposal was approved by a 26 to 14 vote.

Hong Kong, whose population of nearly six million is almost wholly Chinese, reverts to Chinese sovereignty in 1997.

Several legislators said they supported the donation because of Hong Kong's need for international support in the run-up to 1997.

"We have to show that we are part of the international community and not just a passive British colony," said legislator Martin Lee.

Financial Secretary Piers Jacobs said it would make Hong Kong look good to offer a contribution although Britain had not formally asked for one.

The English-language South China Morning Post said in an editorial Friday that rejecting the plan would anger Washington.

"Hong Kong is noted for its pursuit of self-interest, not for its sense of morality, and this is not the moment to break the mould," the newspaper said.

Red tape, indecisiveness slow Iranian economic advancement

DUBAI (R) — In Iran, it takes 24 pieces of official paper and eight official stamps to complete one foreign exchange transaction at a bank.

Red tape and regulations that change by the week and debate about how the economy should be run have killed off most exports except oil, and are suffocating economic progress, Iranian economists and foreign businessmen say.

"There is still red tape, too many formalities, very complicated procedures, and so on in doing business," said Japanese ambassador to Iran Kunihiko Saito.

"Most exporters, feeling insecure and faced with impractical limitations, which incidentally keep changing unpredictably, have had to withdraw from the export scene," said Iranian economist Habib Chini in a report on the problem.

This loss of entrepreneurial spirit has been a major cause in lost export markets, Iranian businessmen say. "There is very little long-term planning. It's in for a quick profit and out again, if you can," said one of the capital's merchants.

The chaos of 10 years of revolution and eight years of war against Iraq drove many educated Iranians abroad.

Others who stayed but had worked for the government of the former shah were ideologically tainted and their talents often wasted. "I'm a qualified English language student but here I am driving a taxi," said a Tehran cabbie.

In recent years, non-oil exports, At a stroke, foreigners can

mostly of non-industrial goods, hovered around 10 per cent of oil export values.

Iran's first five-year plan (1989-93) predicts total hard currency from non-oil exports at \$17.836 billion, or 22 per cent of targeted oil revenues, and with a much greater proportion of manufactured industrial goods.

The government, which is committed to economic revival and more pragmatic policies than in the past, needs a coherent policy to achieve this, say its critics.

Yet policy attempts to combine Islamic economic principles with half-hearted free market theory and elements of socialist central planning — a mixture which is a recipe for disaster, they say.

Some independent economists are encouraging the government to release pent up demand and construction activity, and trust to free market forces to ensure survival of the fittest.

A mini-boom in private construction is apparent in Tehran but dire shortages of basic construction materials, evidenced by the sinking of a Cypriot ship carrying German tar to Iran in the Gulf of Oman in January, mean much building is low quality.

The country's foreign exchange policy provides a good example of confused aims, the critics say.

Iranian bankers say the monetary authorities are working toward a unified currency policy, and this month the central bank said it would allow foreigners to buy riyals at a new floating rate, set by the bank and close to the free market rate which has been available to Iranian nationals for some time.

Some senior officials are also sceptical that playing around with exchange rates is the answer to the underlying problem.

"What is of significance in exports and is adversely affecting Iran is unsuitability and inferior quality of products," said Mustafa Hashemi, director of Iran's Export Promotion Centre, in a published official interview.

"The goal should be establishing trust between exporters and producers and the government through logical rules and regulations," he said.

Some officials, like Hashemi, also argue that Islamic principles of trade rule against interference by bureaucracy.

S. Africa sees trade growth after sanctions

CAPE TOWN (R) — South Africa's trade with the United States and the Gulf would grow when sanctions against it ended but Western Europe would retain its dominant position, Trade and Industry Minister Kent Durr has said.

He suggested at a news briefing the U.S. lobby and government agencies there would put American companies under moral pressure to invest in a new democratic South Africa.

"The American market remains a vitally important market for South Africa," he said.

"I do see us primarily within

the European sphere of influence with strong interest from Asia. I think that will be predominant. But I think it is unquestionable that there will be interest from America," he said.

About 200 companies have pulled out of South Africa in the past decade through anti-apartheid pressure or concern over economic upheaval. Only 36 U.S. firms still operate here.

The United States accounts for one per cent of South Africa's foreign trade. Exports to the United States were \$1.4 billion in 1988 with imports at \$1.7 billion, International Monetary Fund figures show.

Japan, Australia, New Zealand and 16 major West European economies accounted for around \$9 billion in exports and \$10 billion in imports.

Durr said planners from large U.S. companies were visiting regularly to prepare for a new relationship with South Africa. Thirty-five major business delegations from around the world were visiting South Africa in the coming weeks.

He also said he thought the Gulf would "open up to South Africa in a very big way when this

war is over and when we find ourselves in a more normal relationship with the world."

"International trade moves by sea and you have a complement of ports up and down East Africa moving into the Gulf and around the Indian Ocean littoral which have been largely unused for intra-regional trade," he said.

Anti-apartheid groups say Pretoria has bought oil from Gulf states, sometimes in exchange for arms, defying a United Nations embargo on trade in oil and arms with South Africa.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES				
Thursday, February 7, 1991				
Central Bank official rates				
	Buy	Sell		
U.S. dollar	662.0	666.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	515.0 518.1
Pound Sterling	1322.4	1330.3	Dutch guilder	404.5 406.9
Deutschmark	455.7	458.4	Swedish crown	121.4 122.1
Swiss franc	535.3	538.5	Italian lira (for 100)	69.6 71.0
French franc	133.8	134.6	Belgian franc (for 10)	221.8 223.1

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES			
LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.			
One Sterling	1.9865/75	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1580/90	Canadian dollar	
	1.4575/85	Deutschmarks	
	1.6440/50	Dutch guilders	
	1.2448/55	Swiss francs	
	29.95/30.00	Belgian francs	
	4.9700/50	French francs	
	1096/1097	Italian lire	
	127.80/80	Japanese yen	
	5.4670/20	Swedish crowns	
	5.7150/7200	Norwegian crowns	
	5.6040/90	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	368.50/369.00	U.S. dollars	

WORLD STOCK MARKETS	
SYDNEY — Shares defied the downward pressure exerted by a 20-point slide on Wall Street to close moderately weaker. The All Ordinaries ended down 4.0 points at 1,304.	
TOKYO — Stocks rose for the fifth successive session. The Nikkei gained 191.65 points, or 0.80 per cent, to 24,296.08. Brokers said the Nikkei would have risen further had it not been for position squaring ahead of a three-day weekend here.	
HONG KONG — Stocks ended firmer in moderate trading, as recent institutional buying fever spilled over to local individual investors. The Hang Seng index gained 25.11 points to 3,359.09.	
SINGAPORE — Shares closed mixed after fluctuating in a narrow range, with some investors taking profits while others reallocated portfolios. The Straits Times industrial index closed at 1,294.10, down 1.70 points.	
FRANKFURT — Optimism based on the premise that "no news is good news" took German shares to their highest level of the year. The Dax index jumped 2.2 per cent to end at 1,467.82.	
ZURICH — Swiss shares closed higher in fairly active trade fuelled by lower interest rates and Frankfurt's solid showing. The All-Share SPI index closed 7.4 up at a 1991 high of 951.3.	
PARIS — French shares staged a late rally with bond prices surging to 1991 highs. Traders said the rising bond prices and the prospect of continued low inflation in France fuelled the market. The CAC-40 index ended up 24.53 points at 1,622.75.	
LONDON — U.K. stocks maintained small gains in this afternoon trading. The FTSE-100 index ended 1.5 points higher at 2,245.2.	

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TOTAL RECALL

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Friday & Sunday extra show at 11:00 a.m.

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Nabile Obeld / Salah Sadani in

The Path of Fear

Arabic

Performances: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 634144

PHILADELPHIA

MANIAC COP

Performances: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30

Cinema Tel: 699238

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threatens a long-term reduction in living standards "unless one of two things happens — either we sharply improve the quality of our labour force through education, or sharply improve savings and investment in new plants and equipment."

"Our ability to produce more goods and services does determine the pie that's available to us," said Allen Sinai, chief economist at the Boston Co. "That pie grew very slowly in 1990 and is going to shrink in 1991," he said.

The report showed that during the final three months of 1990, the nation's business trimmed the working hours of their employees at an annual rate of 2.7 per cent — the largest falloff since the depths of the 1981-82 recession.

It was the second quarterly decline in the number of hours worked, a normal consequence of recession — as businesses trim payrolls.

While productivity fell for all of 1990, it was about unchanged for the fourth quarter, growing at a small annual rate of 0.1 per cent. In the manufacturing sector, productivity declined at an annual rate of 2.1 per cent in the October-December period — the largest drop since 1981. Meanwhile, factories trimmed their hours by 6.1 per cent at the tail end of 1990.

The decline in manufacturing hours was the steepest since the final quarter of 1982, when hours fell 8.6 per cent, the government said.

For all of 1990, manufacturing productivity increased 3.0 per cent and hours worked fell 2.1 per cent, the report said.

Soviet military in Lithuania distributes anti-secession leaflets

VILNIUS, USSR (AP) — Soviet troops which began Sunday in the Baltic states are a blatant attempt to intimidate Lithuanians from voting for independence this weekend, the republic's president has charged.

Vytautas Landsbergis also said the Soviet military has distributed anti-secession leaflets warning that Lithuania will be destroyed if residents vote for independence in a poll this Saturday.

"They're building up an atmosphere of intimidation and of course this will have a negative effect on the poll," Landsbergis said at a news conference.

Ten days of military manoeuvres are planned, he said.

The development followed a week of relative calm in the republic.

Fearing a Soviet attack, however, hundreds of armed Lithuanians remained on guard at the parliament in the capital of Vilnius. Soviet troops ambushed Lithuania's broadcasting centre Jan. 13, leaving 13 civilians dead. Seven people have been killed in the neighbouring Baltic Republic of Latvia in a Soviet crackdown.

The leaflets, signed by the pro-Kremlin Lithuanian Citizens' Committee, urged Lithuanians to abstain from the poll and vote instead in a nationwide Soviet referendum on March 17 on preserving the union.

"Before expressing your opinion, think over again and again your action. Your 'yes' is secession of the republic from the USSR. That is a categorical worsening of relations between Lithuania and the USSR. That is economic crisis... that is destruction of Lithuania," the leaflet said.

"It will be better for Lithuania if you abstain from the poll until March, when the all-union referendum will be held," the leaflet said.

The committee surfaced last March after Lithuanian lawmakers declared independence from the Kremlin, sparking an 11-month confrontation that included an economic blockade and culminated in the military crackdown.

Landsbergis said military helicopters dropped the leaflets on Lithuania's second-largest city, Kaunas. He condemned the military for helping "this clandestine organisation."

He spoke at a news conference where representatives of the five-member Nordic Council declared their support for Lithuania's independence drive and said they planned to help monitor Saturday's voting.

The Nordic Council is an advisory body to the governments of Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland and Denmark.

In all, more than 75 observers from 12 countries and four Soviet republics plan to monitor the voting, the Lithuanian parliament press office reported.

Voters in the republic of 3.7 million people will vote on the question: "Do you support the idea that Lithuania is an independent, democratic republic?"

The Soviet referendum — which several republics refuse to conduct — will ask, "do you think it is necessary to preserve the Soviet Union as a renewed federation of equal, sovereign republics in which the rights and freedoms of people of all ethnic groups will be fully guaranteed?"

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has said Lithuania's poll Saturday is invalid.

The Lithuanian parliament has become a barricaded fortress with about 1,000 young men in army fatigues on guard. Gediminas Yankus, a commander of the Parliament Guard, said the defenders were ready for an attack by Soviet troops at any time.

The military manoeuvres would start Sunday and continue for 10 days, Lithuanian officials said. They did not know how many soldiers or what kinds of vehicles would take part.

Bugging devices found in Russian parliament

MOSCOW (R) — Eavesdropping equipment belonging to the KGB security service has been found in offices above Russian leader Boris Yeltsin's study.

Soviet news reports have said. The independent Interfax News Agency said the bugging devices were found by deputies, public prosecutors and KGB officials Wednesday in two rooms of the Russian parliament on the banks of the Moskva River.

"Apparatus were discovered, radio engineering equipment in large quantities," Radio Moscow an unnamed deputy as saying.

The discovery of the equipment will inevitably fuel allegations that top Kremlin leaders are acting to discredit or even unseat Yeltsin, the country's most popular politician.

Since breaking with Gorbachev three years ago, Yeltsin has repeatedly spoken of plots against his life.

Radio Moscow said that once the two rooms were inspected KGB officers arrived and acknowledged that the equipment was theirs.

"But they gave no explanation of what they were working on," it quoted one of the Russian deputies as saying. "Why should such an institution as the KGB carry out activities secretly without the knowledge of the Russian government?"

The parliament of the Russian Federation, the country's largest republic, voted to set up a commission to investigate the incident.

Soviet aid convoy crosses into Poland

WARSAW (R) — An aid convoy of more than 200 former East German army trucks crossed into Poland on its way to the Soviet Union Friday after being held up at the Polish-German border for more than two weeks.

The official PAP news agency said 25 trucks crossed the border at the town of Olsztyn escorted by Polish military and civil police.

Similar groups will start the journey every two hours for the next two days.

The trucks carry food and medical supplies given by Germany to the Russian Orthodox Church. The church asked the Soviet army based in eastern Germany to drive them to the Soviet Union.

Polish authorities said the convoy was kept waiting because the trucks arrived at the border without number plates or insurance and were driven by armed Soviet soldiers in uniform.

They were allowed into Poland after the problems were rectified and the trucks were driven by unarmed Soviet soldiers in civilian clothes.

Washington to reorganise nuclear weapons facilities

WASHINGTON (R) — The Bush administration has proposed to shrink America's nuclear bomb-building network, based on projected cuts of 30 to 85 per cent in U.S. nuclear forces over the next 25 years.

The Department of Energy outlined plans that would develop a smaller, more centralised, less expensive weapons-building operation reflecting environmental concerns and the end of cold war brinkmanship.

"We're ready to go in any direction that is environmentally and fiscally sound, in order to support this nation's nuclear deterrent into the next century," Energy Secretary James Watkins said after releasing a study of options for the planned reduction.

The United States maintains about 20,000 nuclear weapons in its arsenal, according to experts outside the government.

The study presented four options for the U.S. nuclear stockpile — ranging from cuts of 30 to 85 per cent — by 2015, the target date for completion of the overhaul.

As such, it represented a major shift from projections by the administration of former President Ronald Reagan in early 1989 that the U.S. nuclear arsenal would not be cut deeply in the 21st century.

In all four stockpiling cases outlined as the possible basis for reshaping the network, the United States would have no need to turn on nuclear reactors and chemical processing plants to produce plutonium and highly enriched uranium for bombs.

All planning was based on a finding that enough plutonium and highly enriched uranium already existed to meet new weapons needs "if nuclear materials can be expeditiously recycled."

The planned consolidation would shrink, possibly to as few as six or seven sites, an industry that at one time operated at more than 100 sites in 32 states since its birth during World War II.

Currently, the Energy Department administers 13 major facilities in 12 states to produce nuclear materials, design and build nuclear weapons and carry out related research.

Under one scenario, the functions of four huge, ageing factories producing bomb components would be consolidated at a single site, possibly under private control.

Soviet prosecutor opens Chernobyl negligence case

MOSCOW (R) — The Soviet prosecutor-general has opened a criminal case against officials accused of negligence in operations following the 1986 accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station, Izvestia has reported.

The newspaper said proceedings would be started against individuals who failed to "assess in the time the scale of the disaster and its possible consequences and did not take necessary measures to protect the population from radiation."

The order issued by prosecutor-general Nikolai Trubin cited no names.

But it referred to delays in evacuating residents of areas near the Ukrainian plant north of Kiev, failure to inform the population of radiation levels and disregard for safety norms in disposing of nuclear waste.

The head of a commission examining the protracted campaign to deal with the aftermath of the accident this week announced that more than 700,000 people were evacuated last year from areas deemed to have higher radiation levels.

The figures were in addition to well over 100,000 people evacuated immediately after the explosion and fire which sent a radioactive cloud over much of Europe.

Some have had to be moved twice because of miscalculations over contamination and at least half a million people still require medical treatment in Byelorussia alone, which lies to the north of the disaster site.

Roh aide resigns over S. Korean land scandal

SEOUL (R) — A senior aide to President Roh Tae-woo resigned Friday over allegations of influence-peddling in connection with a multi-million dollar land deal that infuriated the public.

A presidential spokesman said Chang Byong-jo, Roh's secretary for culture and sports, tendered his resignation over his suspected role in a decision to approve plans for thousands of flats in Seoul.

"Chang said he would take responsibility for causing deep worries to the president and the people. His resignation was accepted," the spokesman said.

Newspapers have accused Chang of using his influence with the Seoul City government to have Hambo Housing Development Company granted the right to build the flats, which would have been occupied predominantly by government officials.

Gorbachev to dissolve Moscow City Council

MOSCOW (R) — Moscow City officials charged Friday that President Mikhail Gorbachev was planning to dissolve the capital's reformist administration in his drive to reassert control over the Soviet Union.

Members of Moscow's freely elected city council said Gorbachev was preparing a decree to limit the body's power and reduce it to the status of an advisory board for central government.

"The Moscow City Council at the moment will be left with only advisory functions," Yevgeny Sayushkin, chairman of the Moscow Commission on Law and Order, told the Interfax news agency.

Sayushkin said conservative Interior Minister Boris Pugo had told city officials about the move at a meeting this week. "The fate of the council has already been decided," he added.

Gorbachev announced last month that the Soviet parliament would draft a law within three weeks to define the status of Moscow in relation to the rest of the country and outline the city council's powers.

Moscow City Council, led by Mayor Gavril Popov, has been at odds with the Kremlin since radicals won control of the body in free municipal elections last March.

It has opened a Western-style commodities exchange, announced its intention to take over property claimed by the Communist Party and raised food prices to combat severe shortages.

Vladimir Bokser, a leader of Democratic Russia, a powerful grassroots organisation that supports radical reform, said the proposed law would prevent Moscow City Council from taking steps to increase food supplies and improving housing.

Cheney: Soviet turmoil threat to peace

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defence Secretary Dick Cheney has said that the inability of Kremlin leaders to control events within Soviet borders could pose a greater threat to world peace than any conscious policy of seeking to expand their influence through military means.

The Pentagon chief, who during the fall of the Berlin Wall adopted the most cautious view in the administration toward the Soviet Union, also cast doubts on the prospects for U.S.-Soviet arms control treaties.

Cheney noted to the House Armed Services Committee that problems remain with the strategic arms reduction treaty, still under negotiation, and the conventional forces treaty signed last November, but not yet submitted for Senate ratification.

"Hopefully, we will be able to conclude those arms control agreements, but it ain't over yet," Cheney said at session dealing with U.S.-Soviet relations, the Gulf war and the defence budget.

Talks between U.S. and Soviet officials on cutting arsenals of strategic nuclear missiles, bombers and submarines resume this week in Geneva following an unsuccessful effort to conclude the pact in Washington.

The prospective treaty was to be the centerpiece for a U.S.-Soviet summit in Moscow next week. The two superpowers postponed the meeting, officially citing needs to focus instead on the Gulf war.

But unstated reasons for the delay were the snags in the arms talks and U.S. displeasure over the Soviet Union's deadly crackdown on demonstrators in the Baltic republics.

Cheney unveiled for members of Congress his fiscal 1992 defence budget, calling for steep reductions in troop strength and acquisitions of aircraft, ships and other weapons in response to a diminishing Soviet threat to the West.

The budget is a response to the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet Union's continuing withdrawal from Eastern Europe and its lessening influence there, Cheney said.

"That means that the greatest threat to the neighbours of the Soviet Union in the future may well come more from the Soviet inability to control events inside the Soviet Union than it will from any conscious policy of seeking to expand their influence by military means," the Pentagon chief said.

Cheney did not specify how he thought such a new threat could evolve. But some military and political analysts have expressed concern that if the Soviet Union drifts into deep chaos, nuclear weapons and other military gear could fall into renegade hands.

Cheney said the new defence plan "is a six-year look that's being offered at a time of considerable turmoil and uncertainty out there in the world. And I would like to reserve the right to be able to come back at some future time and say we can't go down as fast or as far as this programme would take it."

Although the budget for the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1 slashes the number of troops by 91,000 and cancels several weapons, the Pentagon is seeking an increase in funds for the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) and the B-2 Stealth bomber.

Croatian leader boycotts crucial Yugoslav talks

BELGRADE (AP) — The president of the rebel republic of Croatia Friday boycotted a crucial meeting on keeping Yugoslavia together because an anti-Croatian rally was planned to coincide with the talks.

"We can't take part in a meeting when in front of the building people are shouting fascists and terrorists," said Mario Mobilo, a spokesman for Croatian President Franjo Tudjman. "In these conditions, we decline to negotiate."

The boycott doomed the third session of talks between leaders of Yugoslavia's fractious six republics.

The negotiations, begun Jan. 10, are aimed at finding a way to smooth over deep ethnic, political and economic divisions that have brought this Balkan nation of 24 million to the brink of civil war.

Croatia and its secessionist ally Slovenia walked out of the last such session on Jan. 31 to protest what they called army meddling in politics.

Tudjman declined to fly to Belgrade Friday because a Communist-sponsored women's organisation in the largest republic of Serbia planned to hold an anti-Croatian rally outside the building where the talks were to take place.

The group released a statement saying the rally was called to "protest the failure to detain" all protagonists of the monstrous plans for the murder of members of the Yugoslav People's Army and the Serbian nation in Croatia."

This was a clear reference to Croatian Defence Minister Martin Spegej and other Croats accused in an army documentary of planning to murder any officers and their families in case of civil war.

The army has issued an arrest warrant for Spegej, but Croatia's leaders have defied the order to turn him over to military prosecutors in the Croatian capital of Zagreb.

Tudjman, who ousted Communists in free elections in Croatia last spring, Thursday demanded Friday's talks be held in Zagreb or another Croatian city, rather than the Serbian and federal capital of Belgrade.

But the Serbian head of the collective federal presidency, Borisav Jovic, refused to move the negotiations.

Wreckage of missing Greek Air Force plane found

NEA ANKHALOS, Greece (AP) — The wreckage of a missing Greek Air Force transport plane was found Friday scattered on one of the snow covered peaks of the Othris Mountain range in central Greece, the country's top military official said.

The plane with 63 airmen aboard was lost from radar screens as it made an approach for landing Tuesday.

Chief of staff of the armed forces, Maj. Gen. Ioannis Veriakis, said the helicopters spotted the wreckage on the 1,552-metre-high Biliouras Peak in the eastern part of the mountain range. He said there was no indication there were any survivors.

As he spoke to reporters at this Greek Air Force base shortly after dawn, rescue teams boarded helicopters and jeeps for the almost inaccessible area where the wreckage was seen.

Veriakis arrived here within hours after the aircraft was reported missing Tuesday to coordinate the air, sea and land search.

He said that pilot Giorgos Karayannis spotted the wreckage from his helicopter at 3:40 a.m. (0610 GMT) as the early morning clouds lifted above the peak. He reported by radio that pieces of the C-130 Hercules transport aircraft were strewn over a wide area and that he saw no survivors.

The search had been hampered by snow storms and well below freezing temperatures. Rescue teams had reported more than two metres of snow on some of the slopes of the mountain range.

Forest fire sweeps through Colombian nature reserve

BOGOTA (R) — Fire is sweeping through a world-renowned Colombian nature reserve, destroying thousands of hectares of forest which are a haven for many rare animals and plants, officials said.

The fire, which began last weekend, has now destroyed 72,000 hectares (about 178,000 acres), or about one-tenth of the vast Sierra de la Macarena Reserve, and is still burning, officials said.

The United Nations has recognised the reserve, home for many tropical birds and animals, including bears and armadillos, as part of the world's heritage.

"We have found some dead animals, but I don't think you can talk about the extinction of species," Camilo Cardenas, director of the government's National Office for the Prevention of Disasters, told local radio.

The office said it would send fire-fighters and equipment to the area, some 150 kilometres south-east of Bogota.

U.S. Senate approves Lynn Martin as labour secretary

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Senate, by a vote of 91-0, has confirmed Lynn Martin as secretary of labour, filling one of the four vacancies created by the midterm shuffle in President George Bush's cabinet.

Martin, 51, will probably be sworn in within the next few days and start her day-to-day duties at the Labour Department next week, said an aide.

Martin's quick confirmation, following a few brief moments of praise — not debate — on the Senate floor, again puts a woman in the cabinet. Martin fills a post vacated by Elizabeth Dole, who resigned to head the American Red Cross.

A former five-term Republican congresswoman from Illinois, Martin was saluted as a street-smart politician who knew the ways of Congress and could hold her own at the White House.

Critics of Mrs. Dole suggested she was frozen out by White House policymakers.

At Martin's confirmation bearing last week, Democrats noted that she opposed Bush on minimum wage and parental leave vetoes.

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Father sues rock group over son's death

SALT LAKE CITY (R) — The father of one of the three youths who died during a concert by the popular Australian rock group, AC/DC, is suing the band for \$8 million, a court spokesman has said.

He said the suit was filed in state court in Salt Lake City by Curtis Child, the father of 14-year-old Curtis Child, who was trampled to death in a surge of fans during the Jan. 18 concert at the Salt Palace. The suit, filed Tuesday, also names the concert promoters and the managers of the Salt Palace arena, where the concert was held. It accuses the three defendants of "willful, malicious conduct" in failing to control the crowd of 13,000 fans. A 12-year-old boy and a 17-year-old girl also died in the crush as fans suddenly surged towards the stage. A spokesman for the Salt Palace declined comment on the suit. Spokesmen for the promoters and the group were not immediately available for comment.

Underwear helps man escape jail term

NEW DELHI (AP) — A young Australian sentenced to 10 years in prison for carrying hashish in his underwear was acquitted by a court Thursday when he proved that the underwear produced in evidence did not fit him.

Andrews Salvador had been given a 10-year term plus a fine of about \$27,000 by a lower court after his arrest last April. Prosecutors of India reported Thursday. It said Salvador had been arrested just before boarding a flight from Thiruvananthapuram in the southern Indian state of Kerala, to Bombay, the capital of the western Indian state of Maharashtra. The higher court acquitted him after he proved that the underwear summoned in evidence was undersized, the news agency said. Kerala High Court Justice K. Padmanabhan, who heard Salvador's plea, asked him to wear the underwear in the presence of a court official. The official submitted to the judge that the underwear was too small for the accused and that despite all his efforts to wriggle into it, he "miserably failed." In his defence before the lower court last year, Salvador maintained that the underwear produced by the prosecution was not his because he hadn't worn underwear ever since he arrived in the warm coastal state. But the lower court had rejected Salvador's argument and sent him to prison.

Burglar took cab on his rounds

HILLSBORO, Oregon (AP) — A man has been arrested on burglary charges because he called a cab to take him on his rounds, police say. The cab driver said he picked up a man who asked to be taken to a house. The driver said the passenger told him to wait until he returned, and the man came back a short time later with computer equipment and other items. The passenger left the items in the cab and went away again, with instructions for the driver to wait. That's when the suspicious driver radioed police. Police recovered about \$2,000 worth of computer equipment and other items said were taken in two burglaries. Martin Frederick Cowan, 20, was arrested on burglary, theft and criminal mischief charges.

Bishop faces rape charges

VANOCOUVER, British Columbia (R) — A Roman Catholic bishop has been charged with raping two women and indecently assaulting three others more than two decades ago, police said Tuesday. The charges against Hubert Patrick O'Connor, bishop of the lumber town of Prince George in central British Columbia, follow widespread allegations of physical, emotional and sexual abuse at church-run boarding schools for native Indians. Police allege the offences took place between 1964 and 1967 while the bishop was principal of St. Joseph's Mission School in Williams Lake, a ranching community 240 kilometres south of Prince George. The school is now closed. The 62-year-old bishop, a member of the Society of the Sacred Order, is the highest-ranking Catholic official in Canada to face charges of sex crimes. Last week, Canada's Roman Catholic bishops called for a national conference to respond to allegations of abuse at Indian residential schools. But native Indian leaders accused the church of using stalling tactics to cover up the abuse.

U.S. technology office says pollution reduction possible

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States can significantly reduce pollution that caused global warming "without loss of comfort or convenience" or new technology, but it could be expensive, a congressional study has said.

The report by the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) concluded that carbon dioxide emissions, the major contributor to global warming, could be cut by as much as 35 per cent by the year 2015 through a combination of energy conservation, new forestry techniques and use of nonfossil fuels.

"Such emission reductions will be difficult to achieve and could be costly but (require) no major technological breakthroughs," said the study, which had been requested by several congressional committees.

The study was embraced by a number of senators and congressmen as clear evidence that the United States should develop specific targets for cutting so-called "greenhouse" pollutants by cutting reliance on fossil fuels.

Carbon dioxide, which accounts for 55 per cent of the greenhouse gas emissions, comes primarily from burning oil, coal, natural gas and wood.

"The United States has repeatedly failed to invest in a sustainable energy future," said Rep. George Brown, chairman of the Science, Space and Technology Committee, one of the panels that asked for the report.

The report said the analysts from the office of technology assessment examined "only those technical options that would result in carbon dioxide reductions without loss of comfort or convenience" and that could be attained through current technology.

Substantial cuts in carbon dioxide emissions could be costly, it said. Economic estimates varied, showing pollution reductions paying for themselves at one extreme to possible costing as much as \$150 billion a year by the year 2015. That would be 1.8 per cent of the current gross national product.

Energy savings would increase because of conservation and fuel efficiencies, but the cost of appliances, cars and houses — most construction, for that matter — likely would increase, the study said.

The study came as delegates from 130 nations are meeting near Washington to work toward a worldwide treaty on global warming. Many of the European delegates have argued for specific goals and targets for emission reductions by the industrial nations. But the administration of President George Bush has refrained from making such a commitment, arguing for more studies.

Global warming, which occurs when pollutants trap the sun's heat near the Earth like the roof of a greenhouse, has been attributed to a number of chemicals, including chlorofluorocarbons and methane as well as carbon dioxide.

The report said a substantial cut in carbon dioxide emissions would require energy conservation measures to be taken by virtually all sectors of the economy including construction, manufacturing, transportation and energy industries.

The energy savings likely would have to be brought about through a mixture of taxes, financial incentives and government regulation, the study concluded.

It cited the need for more energy-efficient transportation systems, including steep increases in automobile fuel economy standards and a greater use of mass transit. New forestry techniques and the planting of more trees that absorb carbon dioxide also would be required, the study said.

Meanwhile the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency appealed Thursday to more than 600 companies nationwide to make voluntary cuts in emissions of 17 toxic chemicals.

"Pollution prevention can be the most cost-effective alternative to after-the-fact treatment of

pollution," Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administrator William K. Reilly said in a statement. "Companies can save on waste management, reduce the use of raw materials and minimise liability."

The companies asked to participate in the agency's industrial toxic project are the largest contributors to the estimated 1.4 billion pounds of toxic wastes released into the air, ground and water in the United States each year, the agency said.

But it said that being put on the list did not suggest that a company was out of compliance with any pollution control regulations.

The 17 chemicals were chosen because they are among the most toxic and most common substances, and because recognised ways exist to reduce the quantity of releases, the agency said.

The chemicals involved are: benzene, cadmium and its compounds, carbon tetrachloride, chloroform, cyanides, chromium and its compounds, dichloro-

methane, lead and its compounds, mercury and its compounds, methyl ethyl ketone, methyl isobutyl ketone, nickel and its compounds, tetrachloroethylene, toluene, trichloroethane, trichloroethylene and xylene.

The agency said they are used in such industrial applications as metal working, metal plating, machinery degreasing, petroleum refining and the manufacture of chemicals, rubber, plastics, electric equipment, pulp and paper products, furniture and instruments.

The 17 chemicals involved in Thursday's announcement are on a list of 189 pollutants for which the agency is required to issue standards under the Clean Air Act passed last year. The agency said the voluntary programme would supplement the regulatory timetable, and should bring about faster reductions.

Reilly said he expected a positive response from industry, saying, "I am confident it will pay off handsomely."